United Nations E/CN.6/1999/7

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
22 February 1999

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Forty-third session
1–12 March 1999
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern

Letter dated 16 February 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to you in my capacity as representative of the country which fulfils at the present period the functions of Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The Committee of Ministers agreed that the Chair of the Committee should take responsibility for raising awareness, within the United Nations system, of the achievements and ongoing work of the Council of Europe in the field of human rights. Accordingly, I have the honour to request that the enclosed documents: "Information forum on national policies in the field of equality between women and men: conclusions by the Rapporteur General" (see annex I) and the final report on gender mainstreaming (see annex II)** be submitted as official documents of the forty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women (1–19 March 1999) under item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda, entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern".

(*Signed*) André Erdős
Ambassador

* E/CN.6/1999/1.

** Both documents are circulated in the language of submission only.

99-04738 (E) 260299

Annex I

Conseil de l'Europe

Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men

Information forum on national policies in the field of equality between women and men

Tallinn (Estonia), 27-29 November 1997

CONCLUSIONS BY THE RAPPORTEUR GENERAL

Dr Helle KARRO (Estonia)

1. The Information Forum on national policies in the field of equality between women and men took place in Tallinn (Estonia) from 27-29 November 1997.

2. The Forum, held at the invitation of the Estonian authorities and in co-operation with the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs, was organised in the context of the work of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for equality between women and men (CDEG). Participants included experts in the fields of equality, reproductive rights and bioethics, representatives of the medical profession, lawyers and sociologists, parliamentarians and government officials representing the Council of Europe member States as well as non-member States of Central and Eastern Europe, and a number of non-governmental organisations. The Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly, the Steering Committee on Human Rights, the Steering Committee on Bioethics, the Steering Committee on Social Policy, the Education Committee and the Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe were represented. The Holy See, the European Parliament, the World Health Organisation, UNESCO and a number of international non-governmental organisations were also represented.

3. The opening session was held in the presence of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe as well as the President of the Parliament of Estonia and the Minister of Social Affairs.

4. During the two and a half days of the Forum, the participants discussed the following themes:

General theme:	**Guaranteeing freedom of choice in matters of reproduction, sexuality and life styles in Europe: trends and developments**
Sub-theme 1:	**Adolescents and their right to reproductive health**
Sub-theme 2:	**Contraception and abortion**
Sub-theme 3:	**Reproduction and life styles: trends and developments**

5. A general debate was organised within the framework of the Forum on the possible inclusion of the right to free choice in matters of reproduction and lifestyles in a new or existing international legal instrument.

6. A meeting of Estonian non-governmental organisations, organised within the framework of the Council of Europe's Programme for co-operation and assistance with countries of Central and Eastern Europe, was held immediately after the Forum.

7. At the outset, it was underlined that the theme of the Forum was a key issue for all European citizens, linked to their everyday life in Europe. Reproduction is one of the most basic features of the human experience, and it has personal, ethical and social dimensions. It implies that people have a satisfying and safe sex life, and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how to do so. The issues of family planning and motherhood, economic and social development, and scientific and medical progress are all concerned.

8. The right to reproductive health and freedom of choice in matters of reproduction and sexuality has emerged in recent years and was a major issue at the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). The discussions and the texts adopted on these occasions show the significant changes which have taken place in this field.

9. It is essential to establish that the right to free choice in matters of reproduction and sexuality, often referred to as "reproductive rights", be regarded as an integral part of Human Rights. The ability of women to control their own fertility is fundamental for the enjoyment of other rights and constitutes the basis for real equality between women and men.

10. In matters related to reproductive health and reproductive rights, the diversity of cultures in Europe, both between countries and within multicultural societies, is striking as far as situations, facts and legislation are concerned. Today, many women are still taking considerable health risks. The level of knowledge on human sexuality and the methods of contraception available is still insufficient. Too few women and men have easy access to appropriate information and education which would enable them to make free choices with regard to sexuality and reproduction. The unprotected sexual relationships in which they engage or which are forced on them mean that they are all the more likely to contact HIV/AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases.

11. This applies even more dramatically to sexually active adolescents, an increasing and particularly vulnerable part of the population. This observation raised great concern among the participants.

12. Reproductive rights should be approached taking into account not only medical concerns but also considering that there is strong interaction between economic, social and cultural aspects and developments in European societies. This is closely connected with lifestyles and influences reproductive behaviour.

Sub-theme 1: Adolescents and their right to reproductive health

13. Reproductive health is one of the major public health concerns of the adolescent population, both in Western and Eastern Europe. Earlier initiation to sexual activity, frequently changing relationships and multiple partners before family formation put adolescents at considerable risk regarding their reproductive health. The high incidence of induced abortions and the rising incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, are major adolescent health problems, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe.

14. It was emphasised that sexual and reproductive rights should equally apply to adolescents and adults. It is indispensable to guarantee the right of adolescents to information and education, to easy access to reproductive health services and also the right to privacy and confidentiality. Reference was made in this respect to both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recent European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights.

15. In the present situation, where all types of sexual messages are widely distributed (including through pornography) adolescents are often misled. Therefore, it is essential for them to receive appropriate information and education about sexuality. During the discussions in the working groups, attention was drawn to the need to provide sex education in a gender-sensitive and positive way, without over-emphasising health risks, but focusing instead on mutual respect and responsibility. Young people should be aware of their reproductive and sexual rights and gender equality.

16. The discussion focused on how to ensure the quality of sex education and information. It was thought that it should be part of the professional training of teachers and medical staff and should include respect of adolescents' reproductive rights.

17. The sex lives of young people are often threatened with insecurity. Youth counsellors must gain the confidence of young people if counselling is to be successful and motivate them systematically to use contraceptives and to protect themselves against STDs. The first visit should encourage follow-up visits. Most appropriate for young people are special youth services staffed by qualified personnel with good communication and counselling skills. It is important that more men become counsellors in order to assist boys in seeking help and to discuss male sexual problems.

Sub-theme 2: Contraception and abortion

18. Participants underlined that one of the main features of freedom of choice is the ability to decide freely whether, when and how many children to have. This entails the right to easy access to safe, affordable contraceptives, including appropriate family planning counselling.

19. There are great disparities and contradictions in the fields of family planning and sexual and reproductive health in Europe. In Central and Eastern Europe, abortion rates are high or very high compared to Western Europe. In countries where the use of reliable modern contraceptive methods is widespread, the need for induced abortions is low. But even today, women do not always have any other choice than abortion, because essential information and education are lacking, services are insufficiently developed and the choice of contraceptive methods is very limited because of the shortage of supplies or the unaffordable price of contraceptives.

20. As far as legislation on abortion is concerned, extremely contrasting situations may be found in Europe: the most liberal and most restrictive abortion laws co-exist. In countries where women do not have access to safe abortion services, their health and life are put at great risk, resulting in an increase in maternal mortality and morbidity.

21. Given the sharp increase in the incidence of STDs in several Central and East European countries it is important to integrate counselling about STDs in family planning services. It was emphasised that birth rates in almost all European countries have fallen below replacement levels, which may lead to a tendency not to promote family planning and contraceptives. However, free choice in matters of reproduction remains one of the basic human rights.

22. Participants from Central and Eastern European countries stressed the need to move from abortion to contraception. For this purpose, the availability of information, education, services and affordable contraception are essential.

23. Both in the working groups and in the plenary sessions, there was widely shared concern about the lack of reliable research and registration data on abortion and contraception as a basis for action.

Sub-theme 3: Reproduction and lifestyles: trends and developments

24. This sub-theme was discussed in two working groups, taking different approaches. Various trends and developments were identified.

25. It was generally held that, throughout Europe, there is a direct correlation between changes in society and individual reproductive lifestyles. In one of the working groups, it was recognised that the economic situation of individuals has an impact on fertility. If the economic independence of women is indeed important, ideally society should provide the means to ensure a balance between raising children and the participation of women in the labour market. To make the reconciliation of family and professional life possible for women, responsibility for the family and taking care of children need to be equally shared between partners.

26. In order to improve the general health of the population, there is a need for increased individual responsibility and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

27. Several working groups underlined the dangers of prostitution, which is increasing in some countries, especially for adolescents. Lack of self-respect and self-esteem may lead teenagers to consider sexual exploitation as acceptable or even desirable. This may also result in an increase in trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation, in particular between Central and Eastern European countries and the West. It was recalled that this, as well as other types of sexual violence, should be condemned as violations of human rights.

28. Nowadays, it is of vital importance that equality between women and men be seen in a positive way and as a factor in the harmonious development of societies. The interests and needs of both women and men need to be taken into consideration when it comes to policy-making and implementation. This implies the full participation of women in the decision-making process.

29. The participants also proposed a range of more specific recommendations and activities to be undertaken as a follow-up to the Forum, which could be developed both at the national level and in the framework of the Council of Europe or with its assistance:

I. <u>Information and education</u>

- adapt national sex education and information programmes to the changing needs of populations at all levels and in all social contexts;

- ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated into these programmes, in particular in order to make boys and men more aware of their role and responsibilities;

- integrate sex education, pedagogical and counselling skills into the training of teachers and medical staff in order to ensure the quality of the education and the services provided;

- provide information, specially targeted at adolescents and those working with young people, about the dangers of prostitution, sexual exploitation and sexual violence and on how to deal with these issues;

II. Awareness-raising

- use the media to promote awareness in society about reproductive health and rights;

- sensitise media professionals to their responsibility in conveying misleading messages on sexuality and reproduction, in particular for adolescents;

- organise awareness-raising campaigns at national and international levels about responsible sexual behaviour, using, among others, new communication technologies;

- sensitise policy-makers to reproductive health and rights related issues which should be considered as a priority;

III. Services

- guarantee easy access to appropriate family planning and reproductive health services and ensure quality of counselling;

- respect and take into account clients' rights and needs when providing these services;

- provide, in order to prevent repeated abortions, contraceptive counselling to women before and after induced abortion;

- tailor reproductive health services to the needs of adolescents;

- if possible, set up counselling centres specialised in adolescents with the objective to guarantee their right to confidentiality and privacy;

IV. Legal framework

- ensure the full implementation of legislation ensuring compensation for breaches of women's labour rights;

- consider combating adolescent prostitution by the adoption of legislation punishing clients and persons who gain from this activity;

- ensure the full respect and implementation of international legal instruments and agreements setting out the rights of the child;

V. Research and statistical data

- develop high quality social and scientific research and adequate, reliable statistics on reproductive health as a basis for action;

VI. NGOs/civil society

- promote co-operation between different national and international NGOs and governmental structures active in the field of reproductive health;

- provide adequate training for volunteers participating in family planning programmes run by NGOs;

VII. Council of Europe action

It was recommended that, as an international organisation aiming to guarantee the protection and promotion of Human Rights and the rule of law, the Council of Europe should:

- promote the exchange of views, knowledge and experience among European experts and decision-makers in the field of reproductive rights;

- favour the pooling and exchange of experience between its member States as far as methods of research on the reproductive health of adolescents and sex education material are concerned;

- encourage joint projects between different committees of the Council of Europe on specific topics concerning reproductive health and rights;

- step up its work aiming at the adoption of a recommendation to its member States on the right to free choice in matters of reproduction and sexuality;

- prepare a reference document giving an overview of all texts adopted or prepared by the Council of Europe on reproductive health and rights;

- consider how to enhance the impact of its existing legal instruments, such as the European Social Charter and its additional Protocols, taking into account reproductive rights when monitoring the implementation of these instruments.

Annex II

Gender mainstreaming

Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices

Equality between women and men

Foreword

The Council of Europe's action in favour of equality between women and men is an integral part of its central mission, which is the safeguard and promotion of pluralist democracy, the rule of law and fundamental human rights and freedoms.

The last ten years have witnessed important changes in the geopolitical and economic European landscape. Identifying ways and means to remove the current obstacles and to meet challenges to the full realisation of equality throughout Europe is one of the tasks facing the Council of Europe. Its role as a forum for public debate and an agent for the wide dissemination of information on these questions is crucial in the construction of a democratic Europe.

The definition and implementation of activities to promote equality are entrusted to the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG). This Committee is increasingly concerned with the need to look at equality between women and men in a positive vein, in terms of taking into account the needs and interests of both women and men and what each gender can contribute to the functioning of society. It is convinced that the participation of all members of society – both women and men – in all walks of life will clearly lead to the strengthening of democracy and a better promotion and protection of human rights.

Even if a number of achievements in gender equality have taken place during the last decades, women are still discriminated against in many areas of life. This implies that new methods and strategies are needed to promote equality. The strategy of gender mainstreaming is one of these new approaches.

Consequently, the Steering Committee set up a Group of Specialists on gender mainstreaming, entrusted with the task of preparing methodologies for mainstreaming equality and proposing recommendations and examples of good practice to member States of the Council of Europe. This Group of Specialists finished its work at the beginning of 1998 and submitted its Final Report to the CDEG. The report was very well received by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and led to the adoption of a recommendation to member States on gender mainstreaming (see page 11). The Committee of Ministers also adopted a message to all steering committees of the Council of Europe inviting them to take inspiration from the report for their future activities (see page 13).

Recommendation No. R (98) 14 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender mainstreaming

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 October 1998 at the 643rd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.*b* of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the ideals and principles which are their common heritage;

Considering that achieving effective equality between women and men is an integral part of these ideals and principles;

Having regard, in this context, to its Declaration on equality of women and men, adopted on 16 November 1988;

Bearing in mind the objectives set forward in the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995);

Recalling the Declaration adopted at the Second Summit of the Council of Europe (October 1997), in which the Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe stressed "the importance of a more balanced representation of men and women in all sectors of society, including political life" and called for "continued progress with a view to achieving effective equality of opportunities between women and men";

Having regard to the Declaration on equality between women and men as a fundamental criterion of democracy, adopted by the 4th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men (Istanbul, November 1997);

Convinced that one of the main strategies to achieve effective equality between women and men is gender mainstreaming;

Welcoming the *Report on Gender Mainstreaming*, produced by its Steering Committee on Equality between Women and Men (CDEG), setting out the conceptual framework for gender mainstreaming and a methodology for its implementation, accompanied by examples of good practice;

Convinced that the implementation of the strategy of gender mainstreaming will not only promote effective equality between women and men, but also result in a better use of human resources, improve decision-making and enhance the functioning of democracy,

Recommends that the governments of member states:

– disseminate widely the CDEG's report on gender mainstreaming and encourage its use as a tool for implementing this strategy in the public and private sectors;

– encourage decision-makers to take inspiration from the report in order to create an enabling environment and facilitate conditions for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the public sector.

Message of the Committee of Ministers to Steering Committees of the Council of Europe on gender mainstreaming

1. The Committee of Ministers is of the opinion that the promotion of equality between women and men should become a central and permanent issue for the Council of Europe. It should become widely accepted that the promotion of equality concerns both women and men and society as a whole. One of the strategies to achieve equality between women and men is gender mainstreaming. This consists of the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making. In concrete terms, this implies that the needs, interests, competence and skills of both women and men are taken into account.

2. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the work of the Steering Committee for equality between women and men (CDEG) on gender mainstreaming. The CDEG has, through the work of a Group of Specialists, produced a report setting out the conceptual framework for mainstreaming and a methodology for its implementation, accompanied by examples of good practices. The Committee of Ministers is convinced that gender mainstreaming is an important strategy, not only because it promotes equality and makes visible the gender dimension of each policy and activity, but also because it makes full use of all human resources and should lead to better informed and better targeted policy-making.

3. The Committee of Ministers would therefore ask all Steering Committees of the Council of Europe to study carefully the appended report on gender mainstreaming, with a view to taking inspiration from it and implementing this strategy in their programme of activities. In particular, when preparing their programmes of activities, Committees should take care to think about 1) the relevance and the interest of the activity for both women and men; 2) whether there are differences between women and men in the field concerned by the activity with regard to rights, resources, positions, representation, values and norms.

Final Report of Activities of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming (EG-S-MS)

Contents

Introduction 15

Part I: What is gender mainstreaming? 17

1. What is gender equality? 17
2. Are there still problems with gender equality in Europe? 20
3. What is gender mainstreaming and where does it come from? 23
4. How does gender mainstreaming relate to specific gender equality policy? 26
5. What are the difficulties that might accompany gender mainstreaming? 28
6. Why is gender mainstreaming so important? 30

Part II: A methodology for gender mainstreaming 32

1. What are the necessary prerequisites or facilitating conditions for gender mainstreaming? 32
2. When, what and where to mainstream? 35
3. What techniques and tools are available? 38
4. Who are the potential actors and what role can they play? 44

Part III: Gender mainstreaming in practice 48

1. Constructing a mainstream policy plan 48
2. Good practices of gender mainstreaming 53
   i. Good practices of a gender mainstreaming policy plan 55
   ii. Good practices of particular mainstreaming instruments and initiatives 69

Appendices

Appendix A: Members of the Group of Specialists 83
Appendix B: Terms of reference 84
Appendix C: Gender mainstreaming at the level of the Council of Europe 85

Bibliography 90

Introduction

The present report is the result of five working meetings of the Group of specialists on mainstreaming (EG-S-MS), which was set up by the Council of Europe in 1995. The group was composed of eight experts: two members of the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG) and six specialists in the field of gender equality (see Appendix A). The terms of reference of the group (see Appendix B) stated that it was to carry out a survey of measures taken and implemented for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into general policies, programme planning, as well as into sectoral policies and activities at all levels of society, both in the member States of the Council of Europe and in regional or international organisations. On the basis of this survey, the committee was to prepare a conceptual framework and a methodology for mainstreaming gender equality and identify techniques, tools and actors for integrating and evaluating the gender dimension in an effective and visible way. As the terms of reference included transmitting recommendations to the member States and to the different bodies of the Council of Europe, examples of good practices were collected and special attention was paid to the present work of the Council of Europe, especially at intergovernmental level (see Appendix C).

The Group relied mainly on two sources of information. Firstly, it collected the existing policy documents, strategy or working papers. Secondly, women's studies centres and other organisations and institutions possessing specialist gender related knowledge were consulted. The report is based on this material and on discussions in the group.

The aim of this report is to stimulate the various policy actors of the member States and the different bodies of the Council of Europe to initiate concrete actions in the field of gender mainstreaming, and to facilitate their initiatives. The recommendations contained in the report are meant to be general, and are valid for all levels (national, regional and local), as well as for the Council of Europe.

Saying this, the Group is well aware of the fact that a finality has not yet been reached. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy in full development and many options and paths might still have to be discovered. The report is based on the information currently available and should be seen as an attempt at sharing and transmitting knowledge. There is a growing process of exchanging information between international organisations, their member states and individual actors. We hope that the reflections contained in this report will be of some help, use and stimulation to others in their efforts to develop gender mainstreaming methods and to put them into action.

The first part of the report contains the conceptual framework on gender mainstreaming. It places the strategy of mainstreaming in the context of achievements in terms of gender equality. It describes the origins of mainstreaming and its relation to specific gender equality policy. It discusses the problems which might occur when implementing a new strategy such as gender mainstreaming and explains why this strategy is nonetheless important.

Part II exposes the facilitating conditions and necessary prerequisites for gender mainstreaming. It discusses when, what and where to mainstream and gives an overview of the ingredients available for, and the actors concerned by, gender mainstreaming.

The third part of the report is intended as a support for undertaking concrete action. It discusses the points to keep in mind when elaborating a policy plan on gender mainstreaming and gives

some indications for monitoring the process. Finally, it contains a broad range of examples of gender mainstreaming efforts.

The Group hopes that the Council of Europe will actively support the dissemination of this report as well as the implementation of the ideas which it contains, both in its member States and within the Organisation itself. It suggests that the report be transmitted to governments and other authorities of the member States, to the different bodies of the Council of Europe and its Secretariat, and be used as a tool for mainstreaming.

Part I: What is gender mainstreaming?

The first part of the report contains the conceptual framework of gender mainstreaming. It places the strategy of mainstreaming in the context of achievements in terms of gender equality. It describes the origins of gender mainstreaming and its relation to specific gender equality policy. It discusses the problems which might occur when implementing a new strategy such as gender mainstreaming and explains why this strategy is nonetheless important.

1. What is gender equality?

Gender equality means an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference, and aims to promote the full participation of women and men in society.

For a long time - and it is often still the case - gender equality in Europe was defined as giving girls and boys, women and men, *de jure* equal rights, equal opportunities, equal conditions and equal treatment in all fields of life and in all spheres of society. Nowadays, it is recognised that equality *de jure* does not automatically lead to equality *de facto*. It is important to understand that men's and women's living conditions are very different - to some degree because of the childbearing function of women. The main point is not the mere existence of such differences, but the fact that these differences should not have a negative impact on the living conditions of both women and men, should not discriminate against them and should contribute to an equal sharing of power in economy, society and policy-making processes. Gender equality is not synonymous with sameness, with establishing men, their life style and conditions as the norm.

In order to define gender equality, a closer look has to be taken at the gender concept. Two aspects are important in this context: the social construction of gender and the relationship between the sexes.

Gender is a socially constructed definition of women and men. It is the social design of a biological sex, determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in society and in public and private life. It is a culture-specific definition of femininity and masculinity and therefore varies in time and space. The construction and reproduction of gender takes place at the individual as well as at the societal level. Both are equally important. Individual human beings shape gender roles and norms through their activities and reproduce them by conforming to expectations. There is a growing awareness that gender has to be considered also at a political and institutional level[1]. Policies and structures play a very important role in shaping the

1 UNIFEM, 1995:7.
Conclusions of the Conference on "Equality and democracy: Utopia or challenge, Council of Europe, 1995.
Final Report of the Group of Specialists on Equality and Democracy, Council of Europe, 1996.

conditions of life, and in doing so, they often institutionalise the maintenance and reproduction of the social construction of gender. A history of discrimination and restraining roles is unconsciously written into everyday routines and policies.

Gender is not only a socially constructed definition of women and men, it is a socially constructed definition of the relationship between the sexes. This construction contains an unequal power relationship with male domination and female subordination in most spheres of life. Men and the tasks, roles, functions and values contributed to them are valued - in many aspects - higher than women and what is associated with them. It is increasingly recognised that society is characterised by this male bias: the male norm is taken as the norm for society as a whole, which is reflected in policies and structures. Policies and structures often unintentionally reproduce gender inequality[1].

Gender equality means accepting and valuing equally the differences between women and men and the diverse roles they play in society. Gender equality includes the right to be different. This means taking into account the existing differences among women and men, which are related to class, political opinion, religion, ethnicity, race or sexual orientation. Gender equality means discussing how it is possible to go further, to change the structures in society which contribute to maintaining the unequal power relationships between women and men, and to reach a better balance in the various female and male values and priorities. Looking back at the two aspects of the gender concept discussed above, this implies calling into question the domination of ways of life, thinking and interests associated with men and the way in which our societal structures reproduce this norm. The problem is gender hierarchy, not women. The quintessence is to assure that the social construction of gender leaves room for difference and does not contain a notion of hierarchy placing men higher than women[2]. It implies a real partnership between women and men and their shared responsibility in removing imbalances in public and private life. It is a question of using the competencies, skills and talents of each and every citizen, of involving both women and men in building society, solving problems and preparing the future. Society, in order to develop, is dependent on the utilisation of all human resources, and both women and men must participate fully to meet the different needs of society.

Gender equality must be constantly fought for, protected and promoted - like human rights, of which it is an integral part. Achieving gender equality is a continuous process that has to be constantly put into question, thought about and redefined. At present, the most important targets for gender equality include the following aspects:

- An important target is the recognition and full implementation of women's rights as *human rights*. This includes effectively respecting, protecting and promoting the human rights of both women and men and, by taking the necessary measures, enabling both women and men to enjoy fully these rights. It also means combating interferences with women's liberty and dignity (combating violence against and trafficking in women or forced prostitution,

---

1 Scott's definition of gender links gender and power, because she states that "gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power". According to Scott, gender becomes implicated in the conception and construction of power itself, because gender references establish to a certain extent distributions of power, that is differential control over, or access to, material and symbolic resources. (Scott, 1986: 1067)

2 UNIFEM, 1995:7.
Final Report of the Group of Specialists on Equality and Democracy, Council of Europe, 1996.

promoting free choice in matters of reproduction and lifestyles, addressing the specific problems of migrant and minority women).

- Besides human rights, the development and improvement of representative *democracy* is the most important pole. The persistent under-representation or sometimes absence of women in decision-making at all levels and in all fields of life is a major problem, even though there are great variations in this respect between countries. Promotion of the equal participation of women and men in political and public life and all other walks of life is part of the development of society. It is important for society as a whole that both women and men participate in all decisions taken in a society, given their various experiences in life. When women or men constitute about one third (the critical mass) of the members of a decision-making body, they influence the agenda and there is a real possibility for change. It is important also that women become visible in societal events to the same degree as men, and in the history of every state.

- Another very important target for gender equality is the individual's *economic independence*, which leads to the securing of equal pay, equal access to credit, equal conditions on the labour market and the distribution of assets that take into account gender differences in private life. The position that women and men have in the economy is in many ways crucial to the balance of power between them. Fighting the feminisation of poverty is also important in this regard. Linked to the need for the individual's economic independence is the aim to reconcile family and working life for both men and women.

- *Education* is a key target for gender equality as it involves the ways in which societies transfer norms, knowledge and skills. It is crucial that the education systems and all elements of these systems (teachers, schools, textbooks, research institutes and so on) empower both girls and boys, and take care in counterbalancing the existing gender hierarchies. Media professionals can be a target here too, as they have a very powerful position in the transfer and consolidation of norms and knowledge.

- The last target to be mentioned is women's and men's common acknowledgement of the need to remove imbalances in society and their *shared responsibility* in doing so[1].

It can be assumed that the achievement of the targets of human rights, democracy, economic independence and education in a context of shared responsibilities between women and men to resolve imbalances, lead to a society where both women and men experience well-being in public and in private life. It is also a way to a deeper understanding and implementation of democracy as such.

---

1 Declaration and Resolutions adopted at the 4th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men, Istanbul, 1997.

2. Are there still problems with gender equality in Europe?

The most important achievement in gender equality may be a growing awareness of the need and willingness to promote gender equality[1]. Some countries set up gender equality policy machineries, equality policies are developed and implemented and growing attention is paid to specific women's issues. Parallel to this, there is the development of an increasing amount of knowledge and expertise on the position of women and on gender issues. There is also a growing awareness of the role men play in promoting gender equality[2].

The other main achievement is the effective advancement of women. In Europe, the level of education of women is rising, they participate more than before in the formal labour market and they are taking a more active part in public and political life and in decision-making. However, there has been little progress in this field in many European countries for many years - rather the contrary - even if women should, in theory, have every opportunity to enter decision-making[3]. In Central and Eastern Europe, there is a lot of pressure on the former achievements in terms of gender equality. Nonetheless, the development of a civil society in these countries leaves women more room to set up their own movements and NGOs and offers new possibilities to participate effectively in decision-making.

However, these advancements should not be overestimated. Despite important progress, and even if in Europe women have obtained *de jure* equal rights and equal status with men, they are still discriminated against in many areas of life. Moreover, new forms of inequality have developed and there is increasing acknowledgement of the diversity between women[4].

In fact, the progress towards gender equality seems to encounter a number of blockages in Europe and there are indications that this will not change straight away. The structural changes which have been occurring in Europe for over two decades, as a consequence of a globalisation process of financial, capitalist and economic systems, accelerated technological innovation, greater world competitiveness and increasing liberalisation, have been followed by a set of serious social problems which are producing millions of victims and are a menace to the European welfare model. Massive unemployment, greater inequalities, devaluation of human work, pauperisation of large parts of societies, social exclusion, wars and armed conflicts, ecological imbalances are some of the issues that mobilise, today, the attention of governments and public authorities. These issues affect women differently than men and can limit, to some extent, their right to free choice, e.g. in matters relating to sexuality, reproductive health and lifestyles[5]. They also have the result that gender equality in many countries is not regarded as a priority, and that 'more urgent' problems should be solved before gender equality is tackled.

---

1 Leijenaar, 1997.

2 Proceedings of the Council of Europe's International Seminar on "Promoting equality: a common issue for men and women", Council of Europe, 1997.

3 Document on "Women in politics", Council of Europe, 1997.

4 Walby, 1997:5.

5 Walby, 1998.
Proceedings of the Council of Europe's Information Forum on "Guaranteeing freedom of choice in matters of reproduction, sexuality and lifestyles in Europe: trends and developments", Tallinn, 1997.

Europe is also undergoing changes at the political and institutional levels. In Western Europe a new vision of the government's functions and role is evolving, crowding out the welfare state model, in which governments play an important and extensive regulating role. Following this new 'lean thinking', governments should play more of a managing rather than a regulating function. Increasingly, governments consider themselves to be an acting manager, running society in an efficient but not too extensive way, leaving the rest to market forces and civil society. Goal and targets, efficiency, but above all a lean government are central to this management discourse. Such policies are not favourable to gender equality as they do not see the necessity of reconciling work and family life and, more generally, only measure progress in economic rather than human terms.

Many former regimes in Central and Eastern Europe were characterised by a well-developed infrastructure which allowed women to combine work and family life, provided a high level of social security, an accessible health system or a more liberal legislation on abortion. Those rules, partly arising out of an equality ideology, had as a main objective to integrate women fully into the production process. Equal rights did not always allow for a free choice, and equality was mostly defined as sameness. Therefore, the current attitude towards equality policies is often a hesitant one. Moreover, the structural macro-economic and other problems make governments concentrate their efforts on 'heavy' policy areas, which, as mentioned above, leave little room for equality issues[1].

The question to ask at this stage is why gender equality has not yet been fully achieved. What are the reasons for the lack of progress and of understanding gender equality? At the dawn of the new millennium, the idea prevails that equality is achieved because discriminating provisions are removed if states ratify the CEDAW Convention[2]. The vast majority of member States of the Council of Europe have ratified this Convention. At the same time, many states have instituted an equality legislation in order to achieve absolute prohibition of discrimination and full respect for equal treatment. It is recognised that this legislation is a necessary basis for the promotion of equality and it has become fairly strong during the last years. The main problem, therefore, is that the definition of equality used is a very narrow one of *de jure* equality and that protection against discrimination is not always provided.

A second problem is the fact that women mainly had to work on these questions outside the 'mainstream' of society. Equality machineries are often considered to be in isolation, even if they are also a laboratory where excellent knowledge of gender issues is generated and concentrated. Looking back at what has already been said about the way in which societal structures reproduce gender inequality, this signifies that equality policy machineries function in a structure which upholds gender equality but which they cannot influence profoundly[3]. Equality issues should be addressed where they are provoked. Equality policy machineries in some countries, even if they are attached to an important ministry, often have only a limited range of action and competencies.

---

1 Funk & Mueller 1993, Knezevic et al 1997.

2 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979.

3 Åseskog, 1997:2, Schalkwijk e.a. 1996:2.

They have little influence on the policy areas that most affect people's lives and equal opportunity measures can hardly redress the imbalances provoked through other policies[1].

A third problem is that the position of women in decision-making is weak in most countries. A more balanced presence of women and men would be needed to give gender equality a prominent place on the political agenda.

The last problem is partly due to the methods used up until now to promote gender equality. Most policies were concerned with the specific needs of women. Additionally, these policies mainly targeted women and not men, even those aimed at redressing the imbalances between the sexes. These policies, therefore, only reached a limited public which mainly consisted of women. It is clear that changes will be limited, as long as they only focus on one side of the problem[2]. Equality policy should ensure that a gender perspective is integrated into all policy areas and that the whole of society is involved in promoting equality.

As imbalances between women and men continue to influence all walks of life, it is becoming increasingly clear that new approaches, new strategies and new methods are needed to reach the goal of gender equality. The issue of gender equality needs to be addressed at a higher, i.e. more structural, and broader level and it should include a wider range of actors. 'Gender mainstreaming' appears now as one of these strategies.

Besides, gender mainstreaming seems to suit the prior conditions for further progress: the actual changes at the economical, political and institutional levels stimulate and accompany a process of political and administrative renewal, which involves the development of new strategies and policy instruments. Gender mainstreaming is one of those. These economic and political changes were, if considered under the angle of a "traditional" conception of gender equality, limiting conditions. They correspond to a broader conception of gender equality which aims at using the various competencies and skills and at involving both women and men in building society and preparing the future.

---

1 McCrudden, 1996.

2 Berget, 1996.

3. What is gender mainstreaming and where does it come from?

Gender mainstreaming, as a new concept, appeared for the first time in international texts after the United Nations Third World Conference on Women (Nairobi, 1985), in relation to the debate within the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on the role of women in development. It was seen as a means of promoting the role of women in the field of development and of integrating women's values into development work. Actually, it has developed out of necessity: a governmental commitment to implement the ideas of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women had as a precondition that the UN organisations dealt with these strategies in their ordinary work. Therefore, a Resolution on the future work of the Commission on the Status of Women was adopted in 1986, which decided to integrate fully the Forward Looking Strategies into both economic and social development programmes. In 1987 the CSW, on the basis of the decisions taken in 1986, urged all bodies in the UN system which had not yet done so, including regional Commissions and specialised agencies, to formulate and put into effect a comprehensive policy on women's equality and to incorporate it into their medium-term plans, statements, objectives, programmes and other important policy documents.

At the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the strategy of gender mainstreaming was explicitly endorsed by the Platform for Action which was adopted at the end of the Conference. The Platform for Action calls for the promotion of the policy of gender mainstreaming, repeatedly stating that "governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively"[1]. Even though it does not give any guidelines on how to develop and implement this policy, many countries have adopted a national plan for gender mainstreaming as a result of the Platform for Action (see Part III).

In recent years, it has mostly been within the different intergovernmental European organisations that the concept of gender mainstreaming has been promoted. It was mentioned in the European Commission's third medium-term Community action programme on equal opportunities for women and men (1991-1995) and became a central issue in the current fourth action programme. The Commission also adopted a communication on gender mainstreaming[2].

The Nordic Council of Ministers has decided - in a Programme for Nordic Co-operation on Gender Equality 1995-2000, adopted in March 1995 - to take active steps to have gender equality aspects incorporated in all areas of policy and at all levels. This is a main pillar of the strategy for co-operation on gender equality. Furthermore, it was decided to take active steps to have models for the integration of a gender perspective tested. A three-year pilot project was launched in 1997, aiming at developing and testing methods and tools for gender mainstreaming.

---

1 See paragraphs 79, 105, 123, 141, 164, 189, 202, 229, 238, 252, 273.

2 It states that mainstreaming involves "mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situations of men and women (the gender perspective)." COM(96) 67 final from 21.2.1996.

It was also in 1995, during the preparations for the Beijing Conference, that the Council of Europe decided to set up the Group of Specialists on mainstreaming, which developed the present conceptual framework and methodology for gender mainstreaming.

Numerous are the discussions on gender mainstreaming[1], all of them highlighting different aspects. There is little consensus about a definition of gender mainstreaming (most of the definitions speak about integrating a gender equality perspective) or on how to mainstream the gender equality perspective in practice and what this implies. In summary, the following comments can be made:

- All definitions focus on the broad goal of obtaining gender equality. Although the word gender equality is not necessarily mentioned, it is referred to in at least an implicit way. Equally, all definitions focus on what will be brought into the mainstream, namely a gender equality perspective or women's perspectives.

- Many definitions merely describe the strategy itself, often reducing the definition to partial aspects of gender mainstreaming: they focus on the full participation of women in decision-making or on a tool, such as the screening of policy proposals from a gender perspective. In this case the definition and the goal become one and the same, gender mainstreaming is becoming the goal, it is seen as an end in itself.

- Some definitions focus on the effects of gender mainstreaming and what it will provoke in the functioning and structuring of society. These definitions underline the (need for) shifts in organisational cultures and the way of working of institutions or new ways of thinking and approaching policies. These definitions are mainly found in the area of development NGOs.

- Many definitions implicitly assume that mainstreaming involves a shift in actors, meaning that ordinary actors are involved in integrating a gender perspective.

- Finally, it is striking that gender mainstreaming is very often not defined at all.

The Group is aware of the fact that the word mainstreaming is difficult to translate into many languages, and has therefore often been reduced to terms such as "gender-based approach". However, it is clear that mainstreaming is much more: it is an attempt to take gender equality issues into the mainstream of society, the mainstream consisting of the directions, organisations and ideas which make decisions about the policy and the resources regarding general or specific policies such as, for example, education or transport. Therefore, mainstreaming means that gender equality issues would have to be dealt with within work on education, or on transport. In every country, to facilitate its understanding, the concept will have to be translated and carefully explained. The Group decided to use the term "gender mainstreaming" to accentuate the integration of a gender perspective.

The Group of Specialists spent part of its work finding a comprehensive definition of gender mainstreaming. The main importance of this definition lies in the fact that it has to include the different aspects mentioned in various definitions.

---

1 For an overview of relevant literature please consult the bibliography.

Firstly, it refers to what has to be integrated in the mainstream, i.e. a *gender equality perspective* and therefore to the goal that has to be achieved, i.e. *gender equality*.

Secondly, it mentions the functional and structural implications gender mainstreaming involves, i.e. *the reorganisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes*. Gender mainstreaming is a political process as well as a technical one[1]. It involves new ways of devising and approaching policies, shifts in organisational or in institutional culture and will lead to changes in societal structures. Gender mainstreaming involves the reorganisation of policy processes because it moves the attention of gender equality policies to everyday policies and to the activities of the actors ordinarily involved in the policy processes at stake.

Thirdly, the definition is not partial and limited to certain aspects and techniques of gender mainstreaming. (Re)organising, improving and developing policy processes implies the need for various techniques and tools. It includes the full participation of women in all aspects of life as well as the analysis of all proposals concerning general or sectoral policies and programmes from a gender equality perspective. It is important that the definition leaves room for all these tools and techniques to be taken into consideration. Moreover, the availability of, and need for, various actors and techniques can vary from one context to another and the definition should therefore not be finite.

The Group of Specialists agreed upon the following definition:

Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.

The definition of gender mainstreaming highlights the goal of mainstreaming, the process, the objects and active subjects of mainstreaming. The objects of mainstreaming are all policies at all levels and at all stages, while the active subjects of mainstreaming are the ordinary actors. Gender mainstreaming can mean that the policy process is reorganised so that ordinary actors know how to incorporate a gender perspective. It can also mean that gender expertise is organised into the policy process by including gender expertise as a normal requirement for policy-makers.

This definition also highlights the way in which gender mainstreaming intercepts the shortcomings of specific gender equality policy. Gender mainstreaming means that gender equality is part of common policies. Gender mainstreaming implies a broader and more comprehensive definition of gender equality, giving value to differences and diversity. In stressing the need to (re)organise, improve, develop and evaluate policy processes, gender mainstreaming makes it possible to challenge the male bias that characterises society and the structural character of gender inequality. Mainstreaming also gets gender equality issues out of the isolation of gender equality machineries and involves more and new actors in building a balanced society. In doing so, the process of transforming gender relations in the direction of gender equality can be accelerated and strengthened.

---

1 IDS, 1997.

4. How does gender mainstreaming relate to specific gender equality policy?

Gender mainstreaming cannot replace and render redundant specific equality policy and machineries. When mainstreaming is mentioned as a new strategy to achieve gender equality, it is always stressed that this strategy does not replace "traditional" gender equality policy, but complements it. They are two different strategies to reach the same goal, i.e. gender equality, and must go hand in hand, at least until there is a real culture and consensus regarding gender equality in the whole of society. The question is how gender mainstreaming relates to specific equality policy and why it is still necessary to have "traditional" forms of equality policy. The main difference between mainstreaming and specific gender equality policies is the actors involved and the policies that are chosen to be addressed. The starting point for "traditional" forms of equality policy is a specific problem resulting from gender inequality. A specific policy for that problem is then developed by an equality machinery. The starting point for mainstreaming is a policy which already exists. The policy process is then reorganised so that the actors usually involved take a gender perspective into account, and gender equality as a goal is reached. Mainstreaming is a fundamental strategy - it may take some time before it is implemented, but it has a potential for a sustainable change. "Traditional" forms of equality policy can act much faster, but they are usually limited to specific policy areas.

- Given the concentration of competencies on women's issues in one administrative unit, gender equality machineries have been able to reveal important and new issues and to develop policies at the same time. This form of machinery led to an accumulation of expertise on gender issues and their strength lies in this rallying of knowledge. *This expertise is a necessary condition for starting gender mainstreaming: it constitutes the medium*[1] *for mainstreaming*. It is very unlikely that gender mainstreaming will succeed in a society where no "traditional" equality policy exists and where there are no instruments or actors to implement it: gender mainstreaming will demand cross-disciplinary knowledge of imbalances between women and men as the basis for public debate and political decisions, when policies in all walks of life are to reflect the significance of a gender perspective. Moreover, gender mainstreaming will involve a much broader range of "ordinary" actors, most of whom are not gender experts in the first instance. These new actors will need to build up the necessary knowledge to deal with gender issues[2].

- There is an important role for *gender equality machineries* and their actors in this: constituting a think tank having the knowledge and input at their disposal, they *can give the necessary backup*. This role is especially important in countries where women's studies are not yet very well developed. Gender mainstreaming is a new strategy and it needs further reflection and development. Even if gender equality units in some countries are not the main actors in implementing mainstreaming, they carry out important general reflections on mainstreaming and disseminate knowledge and information on gender issues to the actors and to society in general.

---

1 The term 'medium' is used in its biological sense, i.e. a fungus for a culture of bacteria: medium that stands for a breeding ground for ideas.

2 Åseskog, 1997.

- *Gender equality machineries are direct and specific.* They have their own approach: they start from the imbalances characterising actual gender relations and focus on how inequality can be overcome. Gender equality machineries can bring important gender issues to the fore and put pressure on policy-makers to take into account specific gender issues that will not be dealt with in other policy areas. Gender mainstreaming concerns general policies. This means that, when policies having a large impact on society are devised, the specificity, interests and values of both sexes are taken into account. As a result, it becomes more visible that gender equality is an issue for both women and men. Gender mainstreaming means introducing a gender perspective in a given policy field in order to make sure that the effects of policies are more gender neutral, but it does not take the actual gender imbalances as the starting point for developing policies. Specific gender equality policy is a strategy that directly addresses gender imbalances: it takes into account the specific needs of women and men and elaborates policies on issues that are not covered by other policy areas. As with environmental policies, which are generally accepted to exist as sectoral policies, even if environment as an issue is to be taken into account in many policy fields (e.g. agriculture, economy, infrastructure, international trade, development co-operation), gender equality policy needs to exist on its own. Gender equality machineries are the actors who reflect on the government's fundamental role in redressing gender relations.

- Gender mainstreaming builds up on the knowledge and lessons learnt from former experiences with equality policies. It is increasingly recognised that specific equality policies are insufficient to build a society that truly respects gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is the logical next step to take. However, mainstreaming cannot function optimally without "traditional" equality policy, because this policy forms the necessary medium for mainstreaming. Besides, gender mainstreaming cannot be as direct and specific as specific gender equality policy. *Mainstreaming and specific equality policy are not only dual and complementary strategies, they form a 'twin track' strategy*[1].

1 DFEE, 1996.

5. What are the difficulties that might accompany gender mainstreaming?

Given the limited experience with implementing gender mainstreaming, this chapter is based on reflection rather than on experience. However, introducing change rarely goes smoothly. As far as it can be seen at this moment, most of the problems to be expected can be attributed to an incorrect understanding of the strategy of gender mainstreaming, to the current procedures, techniques and tools or to a lack of political will.

- A first difficulty might be the *misunderstanding of the concept of gender mainstreaming* and the way in which it relates to specific gender equality policies. If not well understood, mainstreaming might be considered as a new strategy replacing specific gender equality policy. It might then be used by some governments as a pretext to cease specific equality policy. There exists a clear interdependence between mainstreaming and specific gender equality policy (chapter I.4). Gender mainstreaming requires the continuation of specific gender equality policy, if only to make sure that gender equality issues do not disappear and that equality policies do not get over-fragmented.

- A further difficulty has to do with the *need for a broader concept of equality*. Gender equality is often misunderstood. As mentioned in chapter I.2, one of the main problems hindering further progress in the field of gender equality is the limited and narrow conception of gender equality. Gender equality is not the same as antidiscrimination, it is much more. It is not only equality *de jure* either, meaning that all references to women and men in legislation are removed. Equality as such must be promoted, for example by positive actions, plans of action, mainstreaming and other instruments. The goal is equality as a positive right or equality *de facto* respecting women's and men's rights to diversity and difference, but it also implies that women and men are free individuals. Mainstreaming requires a gender perspective and not a focus limited on women's issues. Gender mainstreaming requires taking into account the relations between women and men, and not simply reducing the concept to the two categories of women and men. In countries where a "traditional" approach of gender equality prevails, the concepts on which gender equality policy is based have to be revised and a gender approach has to be developed.

- Another problem might be the current approaches to policy-making. There is an important difference between mainstreaming and specific equality policy in terms of the actors who implement the policies. Before, equality experts dealt with equality issues, now policy-makers in various policy branches have to deal with gender issues. Mainstreaming involves the integration of a new approach, i.e. a gender equality perspective, into an until then thematic approach. This involves tighter co-operation between policy departments which formerly had an exclusive competence. It can involve a reorganisation of the policy process, and the co-operation of new external political actors, such as NGOs. In other words, *mainstreaming requires procedural changes*, such as the rethinking of approaches to policy making, shifts in organisational culture or the creation of new channels for consultation and co-operation.

- Parallel to this is the problem of policy tools and techniques, which might not be suited to the strategy of mainstreaming. *A lack of adequate tools and techniques* might mean that mainstreaming will be badly implemented or not implemented at all. Gender mainstreaming might require the need to develop new policy tools and to adapt existing ones, e.g. the

reconsideration of statistical data and the integration of gender as an extra variable (cf. chapter II.3).

- A further problem is the *lack of sufficient knowledge about gender equality issues*, which will lead to a bad implementation of gender mainstreaming. The actors in "traditional" equality policy machineries are gender equality experts. When the strategy of gender mainstreaming is implemented, the matters relating to gender equality will no longer be only in the hands of a specific division, but will be present in all divisions in a given ministry. These actors will no longer be specialists in equality issues, which entails the danger that they might fail to identify gender interests or to implement good gender equality policies. It could even mean that they lack a proper understanding of the mainstreaming strategy itself, a problem that has been discussed above. This could lead to a reproduction of the existing status quo. There might be a lack of people having the knowledge to build up gender mainstreaming policies, especially where there are too few women in decision-making. Therefore, gender mainstreaming requires the need to build up the necessary gender knowledge among all policy-makers and learning processes to develop the capacity to put mainstreaming strategies into practice.

- Finally, there might be the *danger of talking about gender mainstreaming without implementing it*. Governments might take a decision saying that equality is to be integrated in all policies and then do nothing more about it or only superficially support gender mainstreaming initiatives. Gender mainstreaming is very fashionable, but it is not an end in itself - the aim is to achieve gender equality. Gender mainstreaming therefore requires the will and firm commitment of policy-makers to redress not only the existing imbalances between women and men, but to tackle the reasons for these imbalances. This includes, among other things, the will to liberate the necessary financial and human resources. As mainstreaming involves "ordinary" actors and policies, the necessary financial and human resources should be found in the normal budget. Not freeing enough resources for mainstreaming, will undermine the achievement of good results, which then will undermine the credibility of mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality.

There might be other problems and difficulties related to the application of gender mainstreaming strategies. However, it has to be kept in mind that new strategies never work smoothly right from the beginning and that some credit has to be given to new initiatives, even if results do not follow immediately. Besides, many difficulties and problems can be intercepted by paying attention to necessary prerequisites and facilitating conditions (see chapter II.1) or to successful examples of gender mainstreaming (see chapter III.2).

6. Why is gender mainstreaming so important?

Following on from what precedes, it can no longer be neglected that gender mainstreaming is an important strategy. Moreover, there are several specific reasons underlining the added value of mainstreaming:

- ***Because it puts people at the heart of policy-making***

  Mainstreaming equality issues may contribute to underlining the need to base and to evaluate any single policy according to its impact on the concrete situation of individuals and social groups, be they women or men, with their particular endowments and needs. Such an approach will improve the practice of basing and evaluating general policies (global and sectoral, national, regional or local) according to their results on the well-being of the people and will open avenues to replace the "traditional" practice of employing abstract economic and ideological indicators (such as GDP and similar data considered neutral and expressed in average values) by more relevant and valuable indicators regarding the concrete well-being of people. It will introduce, among politicians and public opinion, a learning process of paying attention to the broad effects of policies on citizens' lives. Gender mainstreaming may also be a way of placing very crucial facets to women's and men's lives on the agenda, facets that have not been items of attention in the past. Mainstreaming gender equality may be a step forward to a more human and less economic approach of the general development and management of contemporary democratic societies. By taking the gender equality perspective into account, policies will be better defined in terms of the real needs of women and men. The lives of all people, both women and men, will thus improve. In this sense, gender mainstreaming is a real win-win strategy.

- ***Because it leads to better government***

  Gender mainstreaming should lead to better informed policy-making and therefore better government. It will challenge the assumption that policies are gender neutral - which they never are - and reveal the hidden assumptions on reality and values. It will lead to a greater transparency and openness in the policy process.

- ***Because it involves both women and men and makes full use of human resources***

  Until now, work for the promotion of gender equality has mostly been undertaken by a few women. Gender mainstreaming would involve many more people, both women and men. It would also make clear that society nowadays is dependent on using all human resources, and the experience of both women and men. It acknowledges the shared responsibility of women and men in removing imbalances in society. Finally, by involving a broader range of external actors in the policy process (see chapter II.4), gender mainstreaming might help to reduce the democratic deficit, which characterises many current democracies.

- ***Because it makes gender equality issues visible in the mainstream of society***

  Gender mainstreaming will give a clear idea of the consequences and impact of political initiatives on both women and men, and of the balance between women and men in the area concerned. Gender equality issues will become visible and will be integrated into the mainstream of society, whereas until now they have always been on the sidelines. It should

show that gender equality is an important societal issue with implications for all and for the development of society, and that it is not just a 'cost' or a 'luxury'[1]. Gender mainstreaming recognises that the imbalance between women and men cannot be efficiently combated without the interest, involvement and commitment of the political system and of society as such. It will change attitudes towards gender equality, too often negative, and launch a new debate on equality issues, from a different angle to the usual one.

- ***Because it takes into account the diversity among women and men***

It is generally acknowledged that women - and men - are not a homogenous group[2]. In order to pay due attention to this diversity, policies and policy instruments have to allow for taking diversity into account. Gender mainstreaming may be able to target better the particular situation of different groups of women where specific equality policies have so far not been successful, because it leaves room for diversity. From a gender mainstreaming perspective, the problem is not the fact that there are differences but that they are connected to a hierarchical ranking and that there is a danger of measuring all citizens to a male norm. In this sense gender mainstreaming goes a step further than merely working towards gender equality. It leaves room for non-hierarchical diversity in general, be it in terms of sex, race, class or a combination of factors. In other words, it takes into account that human beings are not abstract subjects, but that they have particular identities. This side-effect of mainstreaming as a strategy to promote gender equality is a positive one for the whole of society.

---

1 Rubery, 1996.

2 Women and men differ in various aspects, such as class, race, ethnicity, religious convictions, political opinion, age or sexual orientation.

Part II: A methodology for gender mainstreaming

Part II exposes the facilitating conditions and necessary prerequisites for gender mainstreaming. Furthermore, it gives an overview of the ingredients available for, and the actors concerned by, gender mainstreaming. The reader will find out that there are many cross references between Parts II and III. However, this should be seen as an effort to put in concrete form the various ingredients discussed in Part II through examples of existing efforts to put gender mainstreaming into practice.

1. What are the necessary prerequisites or facilitating conditions for gender mainstreaming?

In the previous chapters, the difficulties accompanying the implementation of gender mainstreaming have been discussed, many of which can be dealt with by paying attention to necessary prerequisites and facilitating conditions. The degree to which these prerequisites or facilitating conditions are available will differ from country to country. Yet, it is important to pay due attention to the framework in which gender mainstreaming is to be implemented, in order to optimise its chances for success.

What, then, can be identified as important necessary prerequisites or facilitating conditions for gender mainstreaming?

- ***Political will***

  The state must define gender equality as one of its main objectives. The vast majority of member States of the Council of Europe have ratified the CEDAW Convention, which shows a visible commitment. However, this is not enough. Gender mainstreaming should be made a political issue. NGOs can be important in helping to create this political will. The government should in addition issue a 'mission statement' stating clearly its intention to mainstream the gender equality perspective into all policies and programmes, and indicate that the objective is that these programmes and policies will effectively promote and lead to gender equality[1]. The government will also have to lay down clear criteria for gender mainstreaming which can help the actors. Without a strong political will to create little by little a consensus on, and a culture of, gender equality, the policy of gender mainstreaming will not be successful.

  The political will to mainstream involves the will to question current gender relations and the structures, processes and policies perpetuating inequality. It implies, among other things, equal access to paid work and to economic power, and the will to adapt the structures and

1 Clear mission statements have, for example, been issued by the Governments of Sweden and Portugal and the European Commission (see examples in Part III).

processes enabling the sharing of family responsibilities and household tasks. If a real culture of equality is to be created, women and men will have to share unpaid work and family responsibilities to a much greater extent than is currently the case. Therefore, the positive aspect of partnership and role-sharing between women and men would have to be subscribed explicitly (cf. chapter III.2 on the communication of the Commission of the European Communities). There is a strong correlation between the political will for gender mainstreaming and public awareness of gender equality issues. Therefore, governments will need to support awareness-raising and dissemination of knowledge of gender equality, e.g. in the educational system.

- ***Specific gender equality policy***

The importance of specific gender equality policies has already been discussed in chapter I.4. Countries with no equality policy could set it up and begin gender mainstreaming at the same time. Historically, such a policy comprises seven aspects:

1) Equal opportunities legislation and anti-discrimination laws: equality legislation serves as a safeguard against discrimination, not least on the labour market. This legislation is a necessary basis for the promotion of equality.
2) The existence of mechanisms such as equality ombuds or equality commissions or councils for protection against discrimination.
3) A strong national equality machinery (administrative organisation) with sufficient tools and resources (both human and financial) to exert influence on policy at all levels.
4) Specific equality policies and actions to address specific women's - or men's - interests.
5) The existence of equality divisions or focal points within each ministry.
6) Research and training on gender equality issues.
7) Awareness-raising about gender equality.

- ***Statistics***

Data on the current situation of women and men, and on current gender relations, are absolutely necessary for mainstreaming. The problem is not only that statistics are not always segregated by sex, but also that data can be gender biased. Good statistics comprise data that are relevant for both women and men and that are split up by sex as well as by other background variables.

- ***Comprehensive knowledge of gender relations***

As mainstreaming is not a goal in itself, but a strategy to achieve gender equality, it presupposes that the necessary knowledge of gender relations is available for policy-makers. Not all knowledge can be developed in gender equality machineries and, therefore, sufficient research in gender studies has to be carried out and made available. Such research would comprise the analysis of current imbalances between the sexes in all policy fields as well as prognoses of how future initiatives will affect women and men. Mainstreaming requires strong gender studies. The existing differences between countries, in terms of the degree of development of gender studies and/or the degree of interaction between gender studies and the policy process, underline the important role these external experts play. When knowledge of gender relations is available in several places in the administrative system, this will facilitate gender mainstreaming to a great extent.

- ***Knowledge of the administration***

  Gender mainstreaming involves the reorganisation, development, implementation and evaluation of policy processes, as well as information about the qualities of the administrative system. This includes knowledge of the location of gender expertise, but also on policy process aspects: what actors are normally involved, which steps are normally taken, who is normally responsible.

- ***Necessary funds and human resources***

  Financial means are an absolute prerequisite for gender mainstreaming, as for any other policy strategy. Mainstreaming implies a reallocation of existing funds. Even if countries show the necessary political will and have comprehensive gender equality policies and detailed knowledge of gender relations at their disposal, this will not enable them to adapt existing policy techniques and tools, set up new channels of co-operation and provide the necessary gender training for policy-makers. All these aspects mentioned require financial means. It would be very short-sighted to take only the immediate costs of gender mainstreaming into account. The advantages and positive effects of gender mainstreaming have already been mentioned - they can be summarised by stating that gender mainstreaming stands for quality[1]. Long-term benefits have to be taken into consideration when considering short-term costs of gender mainstreaming.

- ***Participation of women in political and public life and in decision-making processes***

  It is obvious that it will be difficult to obtain the political will for gender mainstreaming if women are not fully involved in political and public life and in decision-making in general. Therefore, it is important that women enter political and public life in much greater numbers. It is especially important that women enter decision-making processes, to ensure that the various values, interests and life experiences of women are taken into account when decisions are made. It is obvious that not every woman is necessarily an advocate for women's issues, but, as a matter of fact, most advocates for balanced gender relations are women. Besides, experience shows that in countries where a greater number of women participate in decision-making, changes are more considerable and take place at a quicker rate (cf. chapter III.2 on the communication on mainstreaming of the Commission of the European Communities)

What if these necessary prerequisites or facilitating conditions are not available? The most important necessary prerequisite is political will. Without political will, there will be no reallocation of funds for developing knowledge of gender issues or for developing and implementing policies containing a gender perspective. The question is how to attract the interest of decision-makers for gender mainstreaming. As mentioned above, it can be assumed that - given the signature of the Platform for Action- a formal political will is present. This means that the process of gender mainstreaming can be started, even if it requires more than political will alone. Mainstreaming itself will lead to an increased awareness of the persistent gender inequalities and to the development of knowledge of gender issues, which will support the initiation of further gender mainstreaming initiatives.

---

1 Verloo, 1997.

2. When, what and where to mainstream?

Which moments in the policy process are important for gender mainstreaming?

Gender mainstreaming is not a strategy to be put into action once, it should be a constant red thread throughout the whole policy process. All moments are important for mainstreaming. It should already intervene at a very early stage, during the first preparatory phases, but it should in no case be limited to that phase. Gender mainstreaming strategies are to be implemented in several stages during the policy-making process. The following key stages can be identified[1]:

- ***Policy preparing and planning stage***

  At this initial stage, problems and challenges are identified, defined and analysed, their scope and importance are considered, the desired outcomes are defined, broad policy answers are developed and the persons or groups concerned are identified. Mainstreaming is important at this stage, because topics which - up until now - never were, will be considered from a gender perspective. This will lead to the taking into consideration of gender equality in a much broader range of policy areas. In fact, gender mainstreaming should start as early as possible, because the earlier a gender equality perspective is integrated in the policy process, the more probable it is that policies will really take gender into account and not just add a gender paragraph at a later stage.

- ***Policy deciding stage***

  During this stage, decisions are taken on what problems and challenges should be addressed, thereby considering the preparatory work of the former stage and the political scope of problems and challenges. This determines whether issues receive a place on the political agenda and what means are allocated to them. Gender mainstreaming will increase the attachment of importance to topics that have formerly been defined as 'only concerning women', and the number of such topics that receive a place on the agenda. Looking at potential policy problems and challenges from a gender perspective while defining political priorities, will lead to a new ranking of problems and a reconsideration of funds formerly allocated to them.

- ***Policy implementing stage***

  Once the issues have been detected and analysed, the broad goals and policy lines defined and priority allocated to them, these issues have to be put into practice. This includes the elaboration of concrete actions. Introducing mainstreaming in the first stages is no guarantee that a gender perspective will effectively be taken into account when policies are implemented - analysis and action are two different things[2]. There are big steps between detecting a gender issue, endorsing the principle of gender equality and implementing policies which take this issue into account. It is therefore very important to mainstream at this stage and to accompany and support carefully the actors concerned.

---

1 See also: Status of Women Canada, 1996.

2 Commission on the Status of Women, 1994.

- ***Policy evaluating stage***

  It is more and more common for policies to be assessed, in order to determine how far the goals set out have been reached and how useful a given policy has proved to be. The aim of mainstreaming at this stage is to evaluate the effects of policies on the current gender relations. Given its input in the policy preparing and planning process, this is especially important: evaluations serve as a starting point for the development of new policies.

It is clear that these policy stages could be split up into a much broader range of smaller stages, allowing for a more detailed description of the policy process. It is also clear that these stages cannot always be precisely distinguished from each other in practice, nor do they necessarily follow each other in a chronological order. Nonetheless, except for the evaluating process, the described stages are always present in the policy process and should be used as an indication for putting gender mainstreaming into practice.

It might be too complicated to implement gender mainstreaming in all those stages at the same time. The question, then, is which stages are most appropriate to start mainstreaming? The policy deciding process is the most important starting point, given the crucial role of this process in determining what will be taken onto the political agenda. The policy evaluating process is a relatively easy starting point for gender mainstreaming. This stage is an inherently critical phase in the policy process and it serves as a basis for developing new policies. However, this stage of the policy process is not always the most developed one. The policy preparing and planning process and the policy implementing process are more difficult stages to start mainstreaming, given the fact that they involve specialised and detailed knowledge of gender issues. Yet, as mentioned before, they are crucial stages for gender mainstreaming, too.

Which policy areas are important for gender mainstreaming?

Most policy fields are relevant for gender mainstreaming, because they directly or indirectly have an impact on the life of women and men. Policy areas which at first sight do not seem relevant, such as foreign policy, peace-keeping, the resolution of armed conflicts or international trade, might contain (hidden) aspects of gender inequality. Starting gender mainstreaming simultaneously in all these areas right from the beginning is too much of a job, and will lead to an over-fragmentation of finances, human resources and attention. The question then is, where to start?

A first possibility is to start with the crucial areas of concern. The Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) identifies several critical areas of concern, in which action is (still) needed to achieve the goal of gender equality. These areas concern poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflicts, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, the media, the environment, the girl-child. All these areas are relevant for gender mainstreaming. Equally, the various intergovernmental programmes of the different European organisations - Council of Europe, Commission of the European Communities, Nordic Council of Ministers - draw a clear picture regarding problems and priorities concerning gender equality. It is a good strategy to connect to these programmes. Also, the legitimisation of gender mainstreaming will be easier if policy-makers and people understand that it is introduced into a field where there is definitely a problem.

It might be useful to start with gender mainstreaming policy areas that are habitually labelled as gender-neutral. All policy areas which affect the daily life of citizens, such as transport policies, urban policies, social policies are definitely important, although this is often not recognised. The same goes for research policies, because this is an important area to generate knowledge. Mainstreaming these policy areas might be very efficient, given the eye-opening effect it will produce. This effect will be very useful for convincing policy-makers and people of the need for gender mainstreaming, even when basic gender equality seems to be achieved.

However, it might be easiest to begin with policy areas which are generally recognised as being important for achieving gender equality, i.e. those related to the organisation of political and administrative institutions, the labour market, education and social and family policy. Development co-operation has a long tradition in integrating women's issues and, more recently, a gender perspective (cf. chapter III.2 on Swedish and Danish development co-operation). Mainstreaming in the area of education can be very important because it can have a multiplier effect by increasing awareness on gender equality issues. Mainstreaming in the area of the organisation of political and administrative institutions can involve screening the effects of changes in electoral systems, or reorganising personnel polices for the top administrators.

However important all those policy areas might be, gender mainstreaming will have the greatest impact when major reforms are being undertaken in a country or when new legislation is being introduced. Many member States of the Council of Europe are actually undergoing the challenge of major reforms and this gives plenty of opportunities to mainstream right from the beginning.

Which policy levels are important for gender mainstreaming?

All policy levels are equally important, as gender mainstreaming has to be applied throughout society. The relevance of the national level is generally recognised. The relative importance of the various policy levels depends on the structure of a given country. In a centralised state, the main focus will, in a first instance, be on the national level, whereas in a federal state more importance has to be attached to the regional level. Nevertheless, the local level is also of specific importance for the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Decisions usually come from above, from the government, but it is at the local level where decisions affect people most directly and often have the greatest impact (cf. chapter III.2 on the Swedish example of gender mainstreaming at the municipal level). A great effort has to be made to make sure that at the local and regional levels the strategy is introduced, and that the authorities at these levels are given the necessary indications and resources to implement gender mainstreaming.

Gender mainstreaming strategies also take various forms, which will also influence the policy level concerned. Involving NGOs might imply mainstreaming at a local level, given the fact that these organisations often operate at a local or regional level.

It is clear that there are various ways to mainstream, and that the prerequisites of each country will have to be taken into account when deciding on when, where, at which level and what to mainstream, as well as who is responsible. Also, before undertaking gender mainstreaming on a broad scale, it might be wise to start with a phase of development and experimentation in a limited policy area. In this way, the strategy can be tried out and developed before it is implemented on a larger scale. Once implemented on a larger scale, it is important to keep in mind that gender mainstreaming requires a certain degree of diversity. Gender mainstreaming

should be carried out at all stages of the policy process, in all the relevant policy areas and at all levels, involving as many tools and actors as possible.

3. What techniques and tools are available?

Before describing the various techniques and tools available, it might be useful to clarify the terms used and the way in which they relate to each other. It has already been mentioned that the goal to reach is gender equality and that there are two interdependent strategies to reach this goal, i.e. specific or "traditional" gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming. In this report, techniques and tools are defined as groups or types of means to put the gender mainstreaming strategy into practice, i.e. to (re)organise, improve, develop and evaluate policy processes in order to incorporate a gender equality perspective. Many tools and techniques can be used for both strategies. The actors involved and the policies addressed define which strategy it is. Gender mainstreaming puts the accent on a reorganisation of policy processes so that everyday polices and usual actors are involved.

The main point with gender issues in everyday policies is that in most cases the problem itself is not recognised as such. Therefore, there is a need for *analytical* techniques and tools. Policy-makers have the expertise to deal with their policy topics, but, because they lack expertise on gender issues, they do not know how to handle them. Ordinary policy-makers could solve the issues if they had the necessary knowledge. This means that there is also a need for *educational* techniques and tools. In summary, these techniques and tools have to help a policy-maker to detect a given gender issue and to enable him/her to take it into account. A last necessary set of techniques and tools are those that allow for *consultation and participation* of the various partners concerned by a given policy issue.

In fact, the tools and techniques applied in gender mainstreaming are not new or specially conceived for that aim. Gender mainstreaming strategies can start from the techniques and tools generally used in the policy process, provided that they are redesigned and adapted to the needs of mainstreaming. Redesigning and adapting existing tools is a task for specialists having outstanding knowledge of gender issues as well as on the functioning of policy-making processes and on the instruments related to these processes. Applying tools and techniques which comprise a gender perspective requires training; developing 'user-friendly' mainstreaming instruments requires a very high level of gender expertise. It is important to pay due attention to this aspect and to select the right specialists[1].

[1] See the WISE-guide for references on experts. This need for expertise underlines the importance of supporting and promoting the development of women's and gender studies.

Analytical techniques and tools

A broad range of analytical techniques and tools exist, and can be divided into two categories: those delivering information necessary for the development of policies and those which can be used in the policy process itself. The latter, including techniques and tools for assessment and monitoring, will be handled mainly by policy-makers. The importance of analytical techniques and tools lies in their pragmatic instrumental character. Yet, this involves a certain amount of knowledge of gender issues, and, therefore, education. Also, many techniques such as gathering statistics, carrying out surveys, forecasts or cost-benefit analyses cannot be applied by an individual policy-maker. They need a certain form of institutionalisation and might have to be put out to contract. Nonetheless, these techniques and tools are a basis for putting gender mainstreaming into practice. Some examples are:

- ***Statistics***

  The knowledge of women's and men's living conditions must be ensured by routinely working out statistics split up by sex and other background variables depending on the context, for example age and educational background. There is a huge need for identifying, collecting, using and disseminating such data. This means that the current data and data collection methods have to be reconsidered: which data are split up by sex; what criteria are used to gather data and what assumptions and values lie behind these criteria?

  Special attention should be paid to data providing information on the dynamics of gender relations: what is changing, where and at what rate? Statistics form the basis for analysing the current gender relations, for developing forecasts or for assessing policies in the making. Furthermore, data can also be used for awareness-raising.

- ***Surveys and forecasts***

  Drawing a precise state of the art on current gender relations and on their evolution allows for the precise description of important issues and for estimating, depending on the inputs, the varying outcomes of potential future developments.

- ***Cost-benefit analyses***

  Governmental policies can - and have - caused damage to people and society as a whole because gender perspectives have not been taken into consideration and policies have been based on false assumptions. Women's and men's living conditions are so different that the impact of decisions taken can vary considerably. This is very often a surprise to decision-makers, who have so little precise knowledge of the real living conditions of women and men. Cost-benefit analyses from a gender perspective give an insight into the impact of decisions on the various living conditions of both sexes. It is more and more common that governmental policies are assessed for many purposes. The complexity of decision-making nowadays demands a thorough surveillance of all initiatives and adjustments made in order to cope with the rapid changes of technology, market function and international co-operation. Given the differing living conditions of women and men, the incorporation of a gender perspective in assessments is a qualitative improvement in decision-making processes.

- ***Research***

  Research in gender studies is one of the most important bases for gender mainstreaming, because it is the main tool to detect current issues and problems in a given policy field. Research can provide sex segregated statistics, develop a state of the art of current gender relations, set up forecasts: in fact, the former techniques and tools are all results of research. However, research is more than that: fundamental research in gender studies, mostly to be found in universities and other academic institutes, can lead to the identification of new fields and perspectives or help to develop more profound knowledge of the mechanisms which (re)produce gender relations.

- ***Checklists, guidelines and terms of reference***

  All these tools are intended for policy-makers, serving as a help to put gender mainstreaming into practice. Checklists explain what gender mainstreaming is about, set out the objectives and describe the action to be taken. They form precious help, but often have a somewhat static character. Guidelines and terms of reference are more general tools. They are less precise and detailed than checklists, but leave some freedom as how to put gender mainstreaming into practice. Whereas terms of reference are meant for governments and ministerial committees, guidelines are primarily aimed at persons working in the administration. This tool better suits policy-makers who already possess a considerable amount of knowledge of gender issues.

- ***Gender impact assessment methods***

  Gender impact assessment has its roots in the environmental sector and is a typical example of an existing policy tool that has been adapted for the use of gender mainstreaming. Gender impact assessment allows for the screening of a given policy proposal, in order to detect and assess its differential impact or effects on women and men, so that these imbalances can be redressed before the proposal is endorsed. An analysis from a gender perspective helps to see whether the needs of women and men are equally taken into account and served by this proposal. It enables policy-makers to develop policies with an understanding of the socio-economic reality of women and men and allows for policies to take (gender) differences into account. Gender impact assessment can be applied to legislation, policy plans, policy programmes, budgets, concrete actions, bills and reports or calls for research. Gender impact assessment methods do not only have to be applied to policy in the making, they can also be applied to existing policies. They can be used in the administration as well as by external actors, in both cases they require a considerable amount of knowledge of gender issues. The advantage of these tools lies in the fact that they draw a very accurate picture of the effects of a given policy (cf. chapter III.2 on the Dutch and Flemish Gender Impact Assessment).

- ***Monitoring***

  This technique consists of the continuous scrutinising, follow-up and evaluation of policies. It can take the form of regular meetings and reporting or of research and special studies. Regular reporting can be done by persons working in the administration, but this has to be preceded by the establishment of relevant procedures, tools and analytical indicators by specialists in gender topics. Reporting is not an end in itself and the outcomes have to be assessed and taken into account in policy preparing and planning processes. Other forms of

monitoring, such as evaluation research, imply the involvement of gender experts. (cf. chapter III.2 on the mainstreaming policies of the European Commission)

Educational techniques and tools

These are, given the poor knowledge of the benefits of gender equality, probably the most important techniques and tools for successful gender mainstreaming. Educational tools and techniques contain two aspects: awareness-raising and the transfer of knowledge. Awareness-raising aims at showing how existing values and norms influence our picture of reality, perpetuate stereotypes and support the mechanisms (re)producing inequality. It challenges values and norms by explaining how they influence and limit the options taken into consideration and decision-making. Besides, awareness-raising aims at stimulating a general sensitivity to gender issues. Next to awareness-raising there is need for training. People, especially the actors normally involved in policy processes, have to learn how to detect gender issues and how to develop policies in order to take gender into account. Every person involved in gender mainstreaming will have to receive education on the issue of gender equality and of mainstreaming.

However, awareness-raising about mainstreaming and gender equality issues should not be limited to the policy-makers and those involved with its implementation. It would have to target all members of society, and not least people at the grassroots level, so that they understand the usefulness of this strategy, and the fact that the achievement of gender equality will make a more humane society. It is important to develop means of awareness-raising to give impetus to debate, political interest, mobilisation in general as well as means of training to transmit the information and knowledge necessary for action. This also means that existing awareness-raising and training material - especially material for the training of policy-makers - has to be screened from a gender perspective

Some of the possible educational techniques and tools are:

- ***Awareness-raising and training courses***

  Gradual awareness-raising and training courses have to be set up for the various types of actors concerned, ranging from general awareness-raising courses for all the staff, including the highest levels of management, to very specific interactive training sessions transferring specialised knowledge. Courses should begin at the highest level, e.g. with members of government and parliamentarians. These courses should mainly focus on awareness-raising, forming an important impetus for a strong political commitment to gender mainstreaming. As well as the highest level, middle and lower management also need courses. These courses should not only focus on awareness-raising, but equally highlight how these persons can put gender mainstreaming into practice and integrate it into their work. Finally, there should be courses for persons who have to apply gender mainstreaming into very specific aspects of the policy process, and who need the knowledge which enables them to apply specific tools and techniques such as gender impact assessment. Those persons have to be able to understand precisely the implications of gender, to detect gender issues and to formulate concrete answers to them.

- ***Follow-up action***

  Awareness-raising and even very specific training courses are not enough to develop a gender consciousness and to be able to put it into practice. There is need for a supportive post-training context, in the form of regular tasks, meetings or mentors.

- ***'Mobile or flying expertise'***

  These are specialists in gender issues, who provide education at the level of a unit or department. These experts can join a unit in order to help those persons, who have already had an awareness-raising course and training, put the knowledge acquired into practice. It is a very interactive and intensive assistance and follow-up to training, targeted at persons who have to develop very specialised gender knowledge. Specialists intervene in order to put people on the right track. Their role does not consist in doing the work of the unit, but in providing the necessary knowledge and checking whether gender issues are tackled in the way they should be. Gender equality machineries have such specialists who can be seconded, provided that they are replaced in order not to overcharge the gender equality unit. Women's studies centres can also provide such experts (cf. chapter III.2 on the Swedish example).

- ***Manuals and handbooks***

  These tools contain very practical information and can help individual persons to integrate a gender perspective into their work. They explain why, where, when and how to incorporate a gender perspective in policies and contain important sources of information and background material. Ideally, the use of such manuals or handbooks is preceded by training, during which the manuals and handbooks can be used as training material (cf. chapter III.2 on the handbook from New Zealand).

- ***Booklets and leaflets***

  The publication of promotional booklets or leaflets about gender mainstreaming, for wide distribution in the public administration and among the general public, can contain some general information about what gender mainstreaming consists of. Yet, such a publication cannot be an end in itself and should merely be seen as an informing tool, in order to make known the existence of the issue and to raise the general interest of the public. Such a booklet could contain some examples of policies causing damage to people and society as a whole because gender perspectives had not been taken into consideration, cost-benefit analyses and good examples of gender mainstreaming.

- ***Educational material for use in schools***

  There is a growing concern that children and adolescents should learn more about the functioning of society as a whole, about gender relations and about gender equality as being a part of human rights. Therefore, there is a need for educational material for use in schools, containing television and video programmes.

  Developing, redesigning or adapting and implementing educational tools is very important for mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming requires awareness-raising and training on a large

scale, because it involves all the usual actors. It is crucial to gender mainstreaming that they have the necessary knowledge.

Consultative and participatory techniques and tools

One of the main shortcomings of specific gender equality policy is that it only involves a limited number of gender equality specialists who often have little chance to co-operate with other policy-makers. Gender mainstreaming involves a greater number of people, including external actors, and this requires consultative and participatory techniques and tools. Besides, gender mainstreaming also leaves room for involving people who will be affected by policies. Development of democracy is one of the most important targets of gender equality. Promotion of the equal participation of women and men in political and public life and all other walks of life is part of the development of society. It is important that both women and men participate in all decisions taken in a society, given their various experiences in life. This is not an entirely new idea, as policy areas such as the environment, land use planning and development co-operation have a long tradition in consulting the public and in letting those concerned participate. Consultative and participatory techniques and tools will also facilitate the implementation of policies, which, in the end, will increase effectiveness and efficiency.

- ***Working or steering groups and think tanks***

  Gender mainstreaming requires exchanges of information, experiences and knowledge as well as tight co-operation and co-ordination of activities between various actors. Therefore, channels for interdivisional and interdepartmental collaboration have to be set up, including gender equality machineries and external partners where necessary. It is important that these working or steering groups have the necessary means to act (cf. chapter III.2 on the mainstreaming policies of the European Commission).

- ***Directories, databases and organisational charts***

  In order to be able to consult with individuals, groups or organisations concerned with a proposed policy, information about them must be available. Likewise, when plans for citizen participation are made, policy-makers should have at their disposal information on the existing organisations. Directories, databases and organisational charts can be most helpful in establishing the right contacts. As these tools are often available in institutions for various reasons, it can be very useful to contact other institutions for existing directories, databases and organisational charts before collecting new ones.

- ***Participation of both sexes in decision-making***

  Gender mainstreaming requires the full participation of both women and men in all fields of society, not the least at the decision-making level. Lists of qualified women, quotas, positive actions and other special measures for the recruitment, appointment and promotion of women, are ways to ensure the participation of women in decision-making. Guaranteeing an equal participation of both sexes in decision-making also involves the evaluation of existing personnel policies.

- ***Conferences and seminars***

  The organisation of public conferences, seminars and press conferences creates opportunities to inform the public in general and those concerned by policies.

- ***Hearings***

  An additional advantage of hearings is that they not only provide an opportunity to transmit information, but also enable people to participate in the policy-making process. Hearings allow for the direct participation of people in developing and deciding on policies which concern them.

Several techniques and tools are considered in this chapter, but it is clear that this list is not exhaustive. It merely serves as an orientation on the possibilities of several groups of tools and techniques. The choice of tools and techniques to be applied for gender mainstreaming varies from one policy area and level to another and depends on the given prerequisites of a certain country. Nevertheless, it is always interesting to make a strategic mix, i.e. to use a combination of techniques and tools. A first reason for this is that certain techniques and tools are important, but not sufficient. Terms of reference are a typical example of a technique, which, if used alone, can easily remain a dead letter. It is, however, a necessary basis to develop and implement other tools. A second argument in favour of a strategic mix is the fact that the effectiveness of techniques and tools cannot always be fully assessed beforehand. Whatever techniques and tools might be chosen, they should be part of a general policy plan on gender mainstreaming (see chapter III.1).

4. Who are the potential actors and what role can they play?

Gender mainstreaming implies all the actors routinely involved in designing, implementing and evaluating policies. This has been underlined before. Certain aspects of the policy process involve specific actors, e.g. research requires the participation of academic specialists, decision-making involves politicians. There are various potential actors to be involved in gender mainstreaming: in addition to politicians and the administration, including gender equality machineries, there is a role for external experts, NGOs, pressure and interest groups and the media. The different roles of these actors can be grouped into four categories: initiating, executing, supporting and promoting and defending interests.

- ***The role of politicians***

  Politicians play a crucial role in gender mainstreaming, given their official and formal task of defining policy priorities and initiating general policies. Politicians have to make sure that the needs of the whole population are taken into account and served and that policies improve the well-being of society as a whole. The importance of gender equality as a substantial basis for democracy and the promotion of gender equality in all areas of life as a prerequisite for a better society, is generally recognised. Politicians are the main actors responsible for the definition of gender equality as one of the main goals to achieve, for the explicit promotion of gender equality and for the reallocation of the necessary means and conditions required for gender mainstreaming. In fact, politicians are the main actors to initiate mainstreaming. Saying this, it becomes clear that political will and a serious political

commitment are a crucial prerequisite for mainstreaming (see chapter II.1). Even if gender mainstreaming involves many actors and politicians are not necessarily those with the most gender expertise, the main responsibility for making gender mainstreaming possible rests on their shoulders.

- ***The role of the administration***

Administrations not only implement policies, but play an increasing role in detecting and defining policy issues and in preparing and developing policies. They are crucial actors in executing gender mainstreaming, given the fact that mainstreaming means integrating a gender equality perspective in the daily process of all policy areas. After all, it is administrations which have to put gender mainstreaming into action. They are responsible for the continuous mainstreaming process in close co-operation with politicians, who need the experience of administrators for gender mainstreaming as a long-term strategic work. Therefore, it is very important that the administration be prepared to play this role. Most important, the responsibility for mainstreaming has to be anchored at the top level (see chapter III.2, European Commission plan).

- ***The role of gender equality machineries***

Although gender equality machineries are part of the administration, they play a different role. The role of gender equality machineries has to be redefined to match the strategy of gender mainstreaming. As it is now, a gender equality machinery is a think tank to detect new issues, to develop new strategies and to gather knowledge and expertise. It serves as a place for political analysis and reflection. The main role of a gender equality machinery is to act as a catalyst for the work on gender mainstreaming. It plays a decisive role in making people aware of the importance of reaching gender equality, and in making politicians aware of the political needs to do so. Also, a gender equality unit is a support for actors usually involved in these fields to mainstream. It can diffuse information and knowledge, play a role in training and the follow-up to training or develop and adapt existing policy tools to the needs of gender mainstreaming.

The advantage of a gender equality machinery is that it is anchored in the system. It knows how much awareness on gender issues and gender expertise exists, the way in which the administration works and what is acceptable. It has (institutionalised) channels of communication at its disposal. A gender equality machinery, as part of the system, can play an important role in the transition to gender mainstreaming, as it can translate highly specialised gender knowledge into something understandable, acceptable and useful for the administration[1]. Yet, it should be kept in mind that it should never be the role of a gender equality machinery to implement directly gender mainstreaming in the various policy areas.

- ***The role of researchers and experts***

Researchers and experts play an increasing role in detecting and defining policy issues and in suggesting ways to solve them, thereby helping to shape policies. Research forms an important source of information and incentive for policy development: facts and figures,

1 UNRISD, 1995.

surveys or forecasts are all foundations for policy-making. A scientific analysis of a current issue or situation serves as a basis for the political or social analysis made by policy-makers, interest and pressure groups and the media. For example, researchers might help to identify the most important policy areas to start gender mainstreaming. Researchers and experts can also provide an important technical support for mainstreaming, adapting and developing tools and techniques or providing training (cf. chapter III.2 on the examples of Gender Impact Assessment).

The growing role of researchers in the policy process is a consequence of the increasing complexity of policy-making. Politicians and administrations cannot be experts in all topics. The supporting role of researchers also flows out of the new 'lean' conception of the state. An important role for women's and gender studies exists, which plead in favour of further developing these studies.

- ***The role of NGOs, interest and pressure groups***

Women's groups, trade unions, migrant groups, churches and NGOs feel the pulse of society and see - or sense - problems. This proximity to the grassroots and their high degree of specialisation mean that they have a lot of expertise in a given policy field. They constitute an important source of knowledge and play an important role in transmitting it to policy-makers and influencing the political agenda. But this is not the only reason why they should play a role in defining and shaping policies. Democracy requires the participation of a broad range of actors and NGOs, interest and pressure groups make more people participate in the policy process. Therefore, they improve the democratic quality of society. Besides, these organisations are also a watchdog, making sure that gender equality as a goal and mainstreaming as a strategy remain (high) on the political agenda.

- ***The contribution of the media***

Last but not least, the media can influence and shape the political agenda. They inform the public and reflect parts of the public opinion and what the public considers to be important. They can also have an influence in the shaping of the opinion of the public and policy-makers, and can make an important contribution as an awareness-raising tool. The influence the media have in constructing and perpetuating values and norms is also crucial. It would be important for the media to reflect on current gender relations and the strategy of gender mainstreaming, the need to achieve gender equality and what this implies.

- ***The role of supranational institutions***

International or supranational institutions like the Council of Europe or the institutions of the European Communities, play a growing role as a supporting but also as a stimulating and initiating actor in the policy process. Their supranational character creates an important forum for exchanging and disseminating information between international organisations, their member states and individual actors. It also makes them a think tank, which allows them to take the lead in developing new perspectives and in stimulating the initiation of new strategies, policies, tools or techniques. In this way, they play an important role, not only in favouring European networks between those who are active in gender mainstreaming in the different countries, but also in helping new actors to start gender mainstreaming. (cf. chapter

III.2 on the mainstreaming policies of the European Commission, and Appendix C on gender mainstreaming at the level of the Council of Europe).

* * *

This chapter aims at giving an overview of the potential actors, because it is important to keep in mind that gender mainstreaming is not only an issue for politicians and for the administration. Gender mainstreaming must be promoted, executed and supported by a broad range of actors, all of whom are responsible for the fulfilling of their role. The best results will be obtained if gender mainstreaming relies on all the human resources available, which include - it should be underlined - women. If women do not participate fully in decision-making it will be difficult to organise gender mainstreaming in a successful way.

As is the case with the use of techniques and tools, the implication of actors only makes sense if their precise roles are defined in a comprehensive gender mainstreaming policy plan. This plan also has to trace out the responsibility of each actor. Even if the main responsibility for making gender mainstreaming possible rests on the shoulders of politicians, other actors have to take up their share of responsibility, too. A comprehensive policy plan is needed, defining the tasks and responsibility of the each actor involved, as well as the necessary means attributed to them.

Part III: Gender mainstreaming in practice

The aim of this report has been explained in the introduction. The goal is to stimulate the various policy actors of the member States and the different bodies of the Council of Europe to initiate concrete actions in the field of gender mainstreaming, and to facilitate their initiatives. Parts I and II summarise the available information, by presenting a conceptual framework and drawing a state of the art on methods and ways to mainstream a gender perspective into the policy process and to integrate a gender equality dimension into concrete policies. This last part of the report is intended as a support for undertaking concrete action. Mostly this action will be taken at governmental level, although gender mainstreaming is also possible at other levels. Part III is meant to facilitate the start or further improvement of gender mainstreaming. It discusses the points to keep in mind while elaborating a policy plan on gender mainstreaming and gives some indications for monitoring the process. Most important, this part contains a broad range of good practices of gender mainstreaming.

1. Constructing a gender mainstreaming policy plan

The important thing if one is to start gender mainstreaming is to construct a mainstreaming policy plan. The first step is to have an initiator, who will be responsible for the start of gender mainstreaming. The next steps are to take stock of the actual situation - the prerequisites met, the characteristics of the policy-making process - and to design a plan that takes this actual situation into account. Finally, the last step is to monitor the results.

The basic steps of the development of a gender mainstreaming policy plan are to:

- identify the person or group in charge;
- reveal the actual situation: which prerequisites are met?
- describe targets: what are the expected results?
- choose a policy area, level and phase in a context-specific way;
- identify tools and techniques, including the need to develop new tools, or to educate actors involved;
- make clear who will be responsible for gender mainstreaming;
- set up a monitoring system.

The set of necessary prerequisites and facilitating conditions which stipulate the framework for gender mainstreaming have already been discussed in the previous part. The same goes for the possible stages in the policy process, policy areas and levels in which to mainstream, as well as for the tools, techniques and actors that can be involved. The main aim of a gender mainstreaming policy plan consists in linking up these necessary prerequisites, facilitating conditions and ingredients with the policy context and priorities of a specific setting. In summary, the information exposed in Part II has to be translated into a gender mainstreaming policy plan and adapted to the needs and possibilities of a given policy context.

In order to do so, the reader will find hereafter a checklist, containing aspects which should be taken into account when setting up a gender mainstreaming policy plan. The length of the list should not be discouraging. This checklist is meant to be a red thread rather than a strict working scheme, helping to start the mainstreaming process in a structured way.

To what degree are the prerequisites for gender mainstreaming met?

The first step of a gender mainstreaming policy plan consists in giving an overview of the degree to which the necessary prerequisites and facilitating conditions, which stipulate the framework for mainstreaming, are available. It has been said before that not all prerequisites have to be met in order to be able to start gender mainstreaming. The following questions are meant to help in identifying more clearly what could be a possible asset, what could be a problem when starting gender mainstreaming.

Considering these necessary prerequisites and facilitating conditions, the following aspects should be kept in mind:

Is there political will?

- To what degree has the goal of gender equality already been accepted and defined as one of the important goals to obtain? Do current commitments explain the importance of achieving gender equality in all areas of life; state the intention to mainstream a gender equality perspective into all policies and programmes; indicate that the objective is that these programmes and policies will effectively promote and lead to gender equality; set clear criteria for gender mainstreaming?
- To what degree is there public awareness of gender equality issues?
- Is the political will to adopt the goal of gender equality visible? Where is the political will concentrated: in the government, the political parties, the parliament? Is there is a mission statement or any other document on gender equality? On gender mainstreaming?
- To what extent have existing commitments been put into practice? Is there support for gender equality in the administration?
- Which further commitments or mission statements in terms of gender equality will, can or should be taken?

What assistance is available from gender equality machineries?

- What is the mandate of the national equality machinery as an administrative organisation, and what are its human and budgetary tools and resources? What is the position of the gender equality machinery in the hierarchy of the administration?
- What equal opportunities and anti-discrimination legislation does exist and how comprehensive is it?
- How much capacity do gender equality units have to build up further gender expertise?
- What specific equality policies do exist?
- Are there focal points on gender equality at relevant levels or parts of the administration?

What statistics are available?

- How complete is the range of statistics available now, compared to what is needed for gender mainstreaming?
- Are regular statistics desegregated by sex? By other background variables?

Is comprehensive knowledge of gender relations available?

- Is comprehensive knowledge of gender relations available? If so, where can it be found?
- Is gender expertise, such as women's or gender studies, available in universities? Is there gender expertise in other bodies (research and documentation centres)?

How does the administration work?

- How is the decision-making process organised?
- What actors are normally involved in policy-making? Which steps are taken to involve them in mainstreaming? Who is normally responsible?
- What are key positions in the administration in relation to mainstreaming?
- How are key administrators trained? Are women's studies or gender studies part of their training?

Where are funds and human resources to be found?

- What financial and human resources will be needed for gender mainstreaming? What budget is available for specific gender equality policy?
- What decisions are needed to reallocate regular financial or human resources for gender mainstreaming?

Can support from representatives in political and public life be expected?

- What are the proportions of both sexes in the various fields of public and political life, especially at the level of decision-making?

It is important to draw a precise picture of the degree to which these prerequisites or facilitating conditions are available. However, a lack of certain prerequisites is not a reason to put gender mainstreaming off. Some of the prerequisites mentioned above might not yet be available, but could be easily achieved in the near future. In that case, the question to ask is what, in terms of money, time and input of human resources, is necessary in order to achieve them. Other prerequisites might not be easily achievable in the near future. A possibility is to check whether alternatives are available. A precise overview of the available necessary prerequisites and facilitating conditions outlines the framework in which gender mainstreaming can take place. It gives a clear picture of the margin for mainstreaming, e.g. this overview might already indicate the actors available and initiatives that can be taken. In that way, it helps to put the ambition to mainstream in a realistic perspective.

How to make a gender mainstreaming policy plan context-specific?

The second step of a gender mainstreaming policy plan consists in translating the various ingredients of a mainstreaming strategy into a plan of action that is context-specific.

This checklist is an attempt to find a starting point for gender mainstreaming and to set up a comprehensive mainstreaming policy plan. It is by no means a comprehensive list - a gender mainstreaming policy plan should also require a detailed budget or an exact time schedule. The main objective of this checklist is to support gender mainstreaming initiatives. There is not one recipe on how to mainstream, but a whole cookery book. The heart of the matter consists in composing a balanced menu. The success of gender mainstreaming starts with a mainstreaming policy plan that gives a context-specific overview of the possibilities and necessities for gender mainstreaming. The main question to keep in mind here, is where the highest potential for introducing renewal or change lies.

The following aspects should be considered:

Define which actors will be expected to play a role in gender mainstreaming

Consider the following questions to make your choice:

- What role could the various actors, such as politicians, the administration, gender equality machineries, researchers and experts, NGOs, interest and pressure groups, the media, play in terms of initiating, executing and supporting gender mainstreaming issues?
- What should the exact tasks of the various actors be, and how much workload will this involve?
- What means would the various actors need? Which resources can be reallocated?
- What would their respective responsibilities be?

Define the policy areas and levels that are most suited for starting gender mainstreaming

Consider the following questions to make your choice:

- Which policy areas contain the most important bottlenecks to equal gender relations?
- Which policy areas are generally recognised as being important for achieving gender equality and have experience with measures to promote gender equality?
- Which policy areas contain issues which are placed high on the political agenda?
- Which policy areas will produce an eye-opening effect?
- Which policy areas are most relevant for gender mainstreaming in the long run?
- Which policy levels are most suited for gender mainstreaming in terms of:
  - the policy issues dealt with at the various policy levels;
  - the availability of gender experts and other potential actors;
  - the suitability of techniques and tools?

Define the techniques and tools that will be used for mainstreaming

Consider the availability of the following techniques and tools:

- analytical techniques and tools such as statistics, surveys and forecasts, cost-benefit analyses, research, checklists, guidelines and terms of reference, gender impact assessment methods, evaluation and monitoring;
- educational techniques and tools such as awareness-raising and training courses, follow-up action, 'mobile or flying expertise', manuals and educational material;
- consultative and participatory techniques and tools such as an equal participation of both sexes in decision-making, working or steering groups and think tanks, phone lists and organisational charts, conferences and seminars, hearings.

- What are the most suitable techniques and tools in view of:

  - the policy areas involved and the experience with, or need for, certain techniques and tools, such as consultative and participatory tools?
  - the policy levels involved and the experience with certain techniques and tools?
  - the actors involved and their main shortcomings, i.e. lack of knowledge to recognise and analyse gender issues or lack of expertise to deal with these issues, which require analytical or educational techniques and tools?

- What experience and means are available or necessary to develop new techniques and tools or to adapt existing ones?

Ideally, gender mainstreaming should be a red thread leading through all fields and stages of the policy spectrum. In practice, it will be difficult to begin in all areas at the same time. Starting everywhere at once might lead to a splintering up of resources and attention. Mainstreaming has to be started somewhere, and this starting point has to be well chosen, in order to make sure that the gender mainstreaming process will lead to success.

How to monitor the impact of gender mainstreaming?

Once a gender mainstreaming policy plan has been constructed and the mainstreaming process has been started, it is important to watch over the quality of mainstreaming initiatives. In recent years there has been a growing awareness that policy initiatives require follow-up and evaluation, in order to gather the necessary information on their effect and efficiency. Monitoring serves this purpose. Monitoring is more than evaluation. It consists of the continuous scrutinising, evaluation and follow-up of policies. In order for this continuity to be achieved, the monitoring of gender mainstreaming has to be part of the normal monitoring process. The way monitoring takes place has to be decided when the gender mainstreaming project is started. Even if monitoring is generally associated with the policy implementing and evaluating stage, the basis for monitoring has to be laid when preparing and planning policies. It is during that stage that the techniques, tools and criteria for monitoring policies are defined.

Hereafter, the reader will find a short checklist, explaining how the various ingredients of a mainstreaming strategy could be considered from a monitoring perspective.
The most important steps of monitoring are to:

- identify who will be responsible for monitoring;
- identify what has to be monitored: the activities of actors, the results for gender relations, the effectiveness and efficiency of the gender mainstreaming process;
- choose techniques and tools for monitoring, develop indicators;
- organise follow-up.

The ultimate goal of monitoring - continuously improving the quality of gender mainstreaming - can only be reached if the results of evaluation reports and other monitoring activities have consequences for the development of future policies. Given the fact that gender mainstreaming is a new and innovative strategy, monitoring is most important for the further development and improvement of the quality of gender mainstreaming.

2. Good practices of gender mainstreaming

This last chapter contains examples of good practices of gender mainstreaming which have been referred to throughout the report. These examples cover a broad range of policy plans, regulations, actions and techniques or tools. The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the methods and ways to mainstream a gender perspective into the policy spectrum and thereby to facilitate the setting up of a gender mainstreaming policy plan.

Several of the examples mentioned were presented as examples of gender mainstreaming. Others were initiated before the strategy of gender mainstreaming became known and do not refer to it, but nevertheless, fit into the gender mainstreaming strategy. We do not present a full inventory of all existing gender mainstreaming practices. There are other examples which could have been included if more specific information had been available in time. We have made a radical selection among the material received, choosing only the most clear examples. We are, however, most grateful to all those who reacted to our request for examples, because all the material received has been very useful in the Group's discussions to compile this report. We regret that we have not found examples in Central and Eastern Europe yet, but we hope that our report will help all countries in Europe to develop the strategy of gender mainstreaming further.

To make a choice for the examples on gender mainstreaming used in Part III, we used four criteria. The criteria follow our definition of mainstreaming, where it is stated that "*mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making*". Mainstreaming involves the reorganisation of policy processes because it shifts the attention of gender equality policies to everyday policies and to the activities of the existing actors.

Our first criterion is that the examples used have to be the result of *a political initiative at a high level of responsibility*. Political and high level responsibility is needed to be able to achieve this reorganisation of policy processes necessary for mainstreaming. Our second and third criterium are connected to the target of mainstreaming and to the actors involved. The examples must show that the aim is to incorporate a gender equality perspective into *everyday policies*, and that they aim to do so by involving *ordinary actors*, namely the actors who are normally involved in these policies. The last criterion is added to exclude rhetoric policies: as has been said before, we only want examples of mainstreaming in practice, and that means that they have to be *concrete and specific*. It is of course very important if there is a general political statement that mainstreaming

will be started in all policies by all actors, but we want our examples to be more concrete. That means that there has to be a choice of policy areas, or policy levels, or policy instruments, and some results of the mainstreaming project.

The description of the examples includes as far as possible the following elements:

* who took the initiative?
* starting date;
* aim of the project/plan/action;
* brief description of the content;
* policy area(s) concerned;
* policy level(s) concerned;
* techniques and tools used;
* group or types of actors involved; responsibility for monitoring;
* status of the example (just started, running, finishing, evaluated);
* why is the example relevant?
* further information (address and/or references).

I. Good practices of a gender mainstreaming policy plan

Gender mainstreaming policies of the European Commission 56

A supranational gender mainstreaming policy project
Nordic Council of Ministers 57

Mainstreaming experiences in Sweden at national, regional and local level 59

Finland's mainstreaming plan 62

Norway's experience of mainstreaming a gender perspective
into all policy fields 65

High-level political initiative: a first step to mainstreaming in Portugal 68

Gender mainstreaming policies of the European Commission

A clearly announced political will exists, through the adoption of the European Commission's Communication on Mainstreaming, dated 21.2.1996. It states that mainstreaming involves "mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situations of men and women (the gender perspective)." Mainstreaming had already been mentioned in the Third Medium-Term Community Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for women and men (1991-1995), as the integration of a gender perspective into the different branches of the administration. It became a central issue in the current Fourth Action Programme (1996-2000). In parallel, a special structure was set up to implement gender mainstreaming. The Group of Commissioners on Equal Opportunities, chaired by President Santer, is considered to be the most important instrument for implementing gender mainstreaming. Its main characteristic is that it comprises members at the highest level of the hierarchy. Furthermore, permanent evaluation processes are being set up, in the form of a yearly assessment of the progress achieved. Each Directorate has nominated an official who is in charge of gender proofing/assessing each programme or document of the Directorate in a gender perspective. An inter-service group is providing assistance. This Group was set up in 1995 to support the Group of Commissioners on Equal Opportunities, as a preparatory body on Equal Opportunities, as a preparatory body for the Group and as a vehicle for gender mainstreaming in the Commission services. This Group has considerably increased awareness in the Commission services about Community policies on equal opportunities and facilitated the agreement of follow-up actions to the Commission Communication on Mainstreaming. The Group further serves as a forum for exchange of information and best practices in the field and for discussion on equality-relevant Community policies.

Some policy areas are receiving special attention, such as the employment area, the structural funds, awareness-raising programmes. Staff members in key positions will be trained for mainstreaming. Special tools are being developed, and adapted, such as SMART (see page 66). The financing of gender mainstreaming is mostly based on the reallocation of funds.

The European Commission can rely on several necessary prerequisites and facilitating conditions for gender mainstreaming. It has a long-standing tradition of gender equality policies, and is specifically concerned by the goal of a balanced participation of both sexes in decision-making. It has experience in calling upon external academic and other expertise. The Committee for Women's Rights of the European Parliament, the European Women's Lobby and researchers in women's studies, can be mentioned here.

This example shows how political will started a process which was followed by the setting up of an organisational structure and by the development of tools to mainstream policies and to monitor the gender mainstreaming process.

Further information: Ms Anne HAVNØR
Commission européenne
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 BRUXELLES

A supranational gender mainstreaming policy project
Nordic Council of Ministers

The Nordic Council of Ministers has launched a project in order to develop methods and tools to mainstream a gender perspective into labour market policy and youth policy in the Nordic countries. The project started in March 1997 and will finish in December 1999. The main purpose is to develop and test different methods and try to find a model for mainstreaming a gender perspective into normal policy processes. The organisation of the project is like an umbrella, under which a number of activities take place. The most important activities are mainstreaming projects at local, regional or central level in each country. At Nordic level, common activities, such as seminar, working groups, study visits and programmes for the exchange of experience, are arranged in order to support the development of the national projects. A project leader has been appointed for the co-ordination of the Nordic project and a reference group, composed of representatives from all the Nordic countries, follows and supports the development of the project. Project leaders are also appointed for all the national projects.

The following national projects have been launched:

I. The municipality of Ringsted in Denmark has launched a project aiming at integrating a gender perspective in staff policy as well as in the decision-making process and the administration of the municipality. Guidelines for the employment process from a gender perspective will be produced. The project will be supported by the Danish Equal Status Council.

II. Finland has launched a project in the Government, aiming at implementing a mainstreaming strategy for the work on promoting equality. Each ministry will develop and test methods and tools for mainstreaming a gender perspective into their own normal policy processes. A working group is following and supporting the development of methods and tools for mainstreaming (more information on page 57).

III. Two projects have been launched in Iceland, one in Reykjavik and one in Akureyri. The Recreation Committees in the municipalities will test methods and tools which ensure that a gender perspective is taken into account in political and administrative decision-making. Such methods are, for example, presentation of statistics/data desegregated by sex, training courses in gender issues, guidelines and gender impact assessment tools. The Recreation Committees co-operate with the sports organisations on the national and local levels and cultural committees/associations in order to make visible the distribution of resources (time, space, money etc.) between girls and boys, women and men.

IV. Norway has two projects, one at national level and one in Rogaland at regional level. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs will integrate a gender perspective into the ordinary policy processes in the youth policy field. The County Labour Board in Rogaland will analyse a training course for managers from a gender perspective and use the result as a basis for the further development of mainstreaming a gender perspective into the training of leaders.

V. Sweden has launched two projects at regional level in the county of Västerbotten. The top managers of all regional authorities are appointed to the steering committee for the

projects. In the County Labour Board of Västerbotten the analytical tool 3R will be tested in order to integrate a gender perspective into normal work at all levels of the board (more information on page 72). In Skellefteå, a municipality in the county of Västerbotten, the Leisure and Recreation Administration will develop new working methods in order to ensure a gender perspective in the normal administrative process.

VI. The Faeroe Islands have launched a mainstreaming project at a teacher training college aiming at integrating a gender perspective in the training of nursery teachers.

VII. The Åland Islands will test mainstreaming as a strategy for work on promoting equality in youth policy at central and local level.

All projects will be evaluated and the results will be presented in a final report to the Nordic Council of Ministers at the end of 1999.

Further information: Birgitta ÅSESKOG
Principal Administrative Officer
Ministry of Labour, Equality Affairs Division
Drottninggatan 21, S - 103 33 STOCKHOLM
Tel: (46) 8 405 1261; Fax (46) 8 247 152
Internet: birgitta.aseskog@labour.ministry.se

Mainstreaming experiences in Sweden at national, regional and local level

In 1994, the Government decided to give responsibility for equality policy to the Deputy Prime Minister. It was also declared in the annual statement of government policy that the gender equality perspective should be taken into account in the preparatory proceedings of all decisions by the Cabinet. All ministers should be responsible for gender impact analysis and work on promoting equality within their fields of responsibility. Such an organisation underlined the fact that equality work should be an integral part of political decision-making and integrated into policy processes in all areas of society.

In the same year, the Government also decided on special terms of reference, stating that all government committees of inquiry should analyse and discuss their proposals from a gender perspective. The gender impact - whether direct or indirect - of proposed changes in the labour market, in the economy, in the welfare system, in education, etc. should be described. If the committee or the special commissioner considers it impossible or unnecessary to do so, the reason must be stated. Organisational and budgetary matters also have to be analysed from a gender perspective. Training courses on equality issues are offered to all special commissioners and their secretaries. From 1994 onwards the Government instructed Statistics Sweden to present all statistics, based on individuals, desegregated by sex. Two years later, the Government commissioned the National Labour Market Administration to present labour market statistics desegregated by sex.

Organisation of mainstreaming

The responsibility for the development of tools and routines to ensure that the gender impact is considered in administrative proceedings, for example in planning processes and budgeting, lies with the State Secretary of each ministry. The State Secretary to the Minister for Labour Law, Working Hours and Equality Affairs is responsible for the co-ordination and the monitoring process. She arranges regular meetings with the State Secretaries of all ministries on the development of mainstreaming and issues statements concerning equality between women and men. She also offers training on gender issues to the ministries.

The Equality Affairs Division has overall responsibility for developing tools and mechanisms for mainstreaming. The Division also scrutinises all proposals for government bills and other government decisions emanating from various ministries prior to discussions and decisions by the Cabinet. This is to ensure that the gender perspective is taken into account. Another important task is to supervise and approve proposed appointments to government boards and committees of inquiry before they are submitted to the Cabinet for a decision. The Government has set the target that the official committees and government boards should have an equal representation of women and men by 1998.

At regional level, the County Administrative Boards, which are government authorities, are responsible for mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policy fields. The County Administrative Boards have employed gender experts to start, support and monitor the process of mainstreaming a gender perspective in normal work in all policy fields. A medium-term strategic plan (1997-2000) for the work on promoting equality has been designed by each Board and submitted to the Government.

In 1995, the Government allocated funds to the Swedish Association of Local Authorities in order to stimulate the development of mainstreaming a gender perspective in local policy processes. A two-year programme was launched, JAMKOM, with the aim of examining how a committee or board can work systematically for gender equality in its own field of operation. In order to put mainstreaming into operation, JAMKOM tried out a method, the 3R method, the main purpose of which is to systematise a gender equality analysis. A final report on the programme was presented to the Government in February 1998. (A description of the programme can be found on page 72).

Methods: training seminars, gender experts

Awareness-raising and training seminars for top-level management were first organised in 1994 and are still high on the agenda. The Equality Affairs Division has developed a three-hour training course/seminar on equality issues for Ministers, State Secretaries, political advisors, special commissioners and the top management of public authorities. The main aim of the seminars is to provide statistics and facts on the situation of women and men in Swedish society. Other important topics raised at the seminars are how to implement the national goals for equality policy and what tools and mechanisms could be used in a mainstreaming strategy. To meet the need for gender training in the Government Office and the public administration, the Equality Affairs Division will use the services of 10 gender trainers, besides a gender expert and a representative from Statistics Sweden. The Government has also engaged a "flying gender expert" (see page 68) who has joined some of the ministries in order to help develop methods and routines which ensure a gender perspective in policy processes.

In the ministries, the seminars are followed up by regular meetings with the State Secretary responsible for equality policy and the head of the Equality Affairs Division. Points discussed at these meetings include active measures to promote equality, gender impact analyses, the gender perspective of the budget and the representation of women on government boards and committees.

The Equality Affairs Division has developed an analytical tool to assess the different effects of policy proposals on women and men. Some ministries will be testing its use. Similar tools are in use in public authorities and municipalities. There is still a lack of experience on the use of gender impact assessment tools, both in the Government and in public administration.

The Minister for Labour Law, Working Hours and Equality Affairs set up a working group on mainstreaming in January 1998, chaired by the State Secretary for Equality Affairs and with representatives from central, regional and local level. The task of the group is to draw up the gender training programme, and develop methods for gender impact assessment and methods for monitoring and evaluation. The Minister has allocated funds to the group for seminars, hearings, research and trial projects.

Monitoring and follow-up

The Equality Affairs Division scrutinises, *inter alia*, budget documents which are crucial for progress towards equality between women and men. A gender perspective must also be taken into account in the budget dialogue between the Government and public authorities. In order to monitor the development of the mainstreaming process in government from 1994 to 1996, all ministries had to review the equality work in their own ministry and present a report to the Minister for Labour Law, Working Hours and Equality Affairs. The reports were compiled and presented to Parliament. In 1997 the ministries were asked to assess the effects of the special terms of reference (1994), stating that all government committees of inquiry should analyse and discuss their proposals from a gender perspective. An analysis has been made of the reports and it shows that 33 per cent of a total of 193 committees of inquiry had discussed their results from a gender perspective, although very few of them presented a comprehensive gender analysis.

Some experience

Political will at the highest level and strategic work over a long period is needed in order to change strategies from traditional equality policy to mainstreaming. The declaration (repeated every year since 1994) of the Prime Minister in the annual statement of government policy, that the gender equality perspective should be taken into account in the preparatory proceedings of all decisions by the Cabinet, has been an important legitimate base for the implementation of mainstreaming methods. It is a written declaration which is often referred to in the dialogue on gender issues between the Equality Affairs Division and the ministries.

A lack of knowledge of gender issues among both politicians and officials in the ministries is still a problem. Many of them do not understand what is expected of them or what it means (in a concrete way) to take a gender perspective into account in their normal work. A common misunderstanding is that work on promoting equality only deals with staff policy, for example, by setting targets for the recruitment of women, training of women leaders, and so on. The organisation of seminars on gender issues and the development of methods for continuous training is therefore important. Equally important is the development of monitoring and assessment tools. So far, Sweden lacks experience in using analytical tools to assess gender relevance or the gender impact on policy proposals. Such tools and methods will be focused on in the years to come. Implementing a mainstreaming strategy is a long-term procedure.

Further information: Mona DANIELSON
Ministry of Labour, Equality Affairs Division,
S-103 33 STOCKHOLM
Tel: 46 8405 1299; Fax: 46 824 7152
E-mail: mona.danielson@labour.ministry.se

Finland's mainstreaming plan

The Finnish mainstreaming project starts in 1998, and will run until 2001. The aim of the project is to develop methods to integrate the promotion of equality between women and men into the preparation of measures taken by public administration, as well as its decision-making, implementation, monitoring and appraisal. The gender effects of all the measures will be considered. The project will create tools that will take into account gender, such as tools to develop the expertise of the work organisation and staff, methods of mainstreaming training, methods of appraisal related to preparation of budgets and methods of drafting legislative proposals. The project will bring about more equal administrative practices and reinforce the commitment to the mainstreaming of equality.

The project has adopted the following definition of mainstreaming in practice (Åseskog, 1997):

- the different situations of women and men are made visible;
- issues related to individuals are assessed from the gender perspective;
- the impact of changes is assessed from the perspective of women and men in their living conditions.

Different ministries have promised to promote equal opportunities by choosing projects in their specific sector. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, which houses the Office of Equality, has chosen as one of its major projects the development of mainstreaming methodology. This project will also be the Finnish contribution to the mainstreaming project of the Nordic Council of Ministers, of which all the Nordic countries are part (see page 52). The aim of this action research project is to develop, in collaboration with the various ministries, a methodological package and an approach which may enhance the mainstreaming of equal opportunities in administrative practice and in the training of personnel. This will result in instruments which will help governments to respond better to the needs of clients and citizens.

Thus, the anticipated results comprise, on the one hand, specific instruments or tools which assist in the development of the work organisation and the competence of the personnel and, on the other hand, new gender-friendly administrative practice and commitment to the promotion of mainstreaming.

Recent studies indicate that mainstreaming methods consist of techniques which can be applied from both outside and inside the "system", in addition to a few transversal methods applicable in all situations (cf Horelli, Booth and Gilroy, 1997). Methods also vary in terms of their target, as they can be applied to the individual, interpersonal, symbolic or structural level (Acker, 1995) The central method to be applied in this study will be a specifically tailored gender analysis according to the different areas or sectors (Horelli and Roininen, 1997).

Gendered practices are, however, a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, the registration of which requires an innovative research design and a multitude of research techniques.

The general research questions, which will be specified in each sub-project, are the following:

1. How should mainstreaming be defined and made operational in different areas?

2. What kind of techniques should be applied for the enhancement of equality in different areas, such as legislation, training, etc?
3. What kind of models of mainstreaming can be constructed in different areas, and what is the impact of ethnic and sociocultural factors?
4. What is the added value of mainstreaming in the current administrative culture and products?
5. What are the characteristics of a Nordic mainstreaming methodology?

Methodology and implementation of the study

The nature of the action research is explorative and interactive. The first phase of the study (1998-1999) consists of the participating ministries and institutions choosing mainstreaming subjects. The methodological package of mainstreaming and the eventually changing practice will be gradually brought about through a dialectical and empowering monitoring and evaluation of these projects in collaboration with the participants. As all the sub-projects have not yet been chosen, it is not possible to define the final methods to be applied. The preliminary set of sub-projects consists of the following:

The project of the Ministry of Labour, called the "Ministry in the next millennium" (MULLE), deals with the modernisation of the working habits and organisation of the ministry itself (1.8.1997-31.12.1998). Methods will include surveys, interviews and simulation games.

The project of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs strives to mainstream gender into the training of chairpersons of the working groups during Finland's presidency of the European Union in the autumn of 1998. Methods include surveys, gender training and interviews (1998-2000).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry intends to mainstream gender into the structural unit of the ministry through the renegotiation of a bill with the EU concerning the ownership of farms of both the husband and the wife (1998-2000).

The Work Protection Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has chosen a project which aims at enhancing equal opportunities through the improvement of professional skills of their office personnel (1998-2000). The methods comprise the construction and choice of training modules, surveys, observing practices, etc.

The Ministry of Education has chosen an umbrella project dealing with youth policy. The project design is in progress (1998-2000).

The Ministry of the Environment will integrate gender analysis with environmental impact assessment (1998-2000).

The second phase (1999-2000) consists of the analysis of the results of the previous phase and the choice of new targets and objects. Proposals will be made to expand the scope of mainstreaming within the ministries. The aim is to expand into projects, which may have some structural consequences. The third phase (2000-2001) consists of the fine-tuning and marketing of the results as well as of an evaluation of the process and products.

Organisation of the study

The study is conducted by Dr Liisa Horelli, assisted by Janne Roininen, MA, both from ITSU Oy. Each sub-project has its own project organisation. The steering board of the project consists of the representatives of the ministries or institutions which have a mainstreaming sub-project, as well as of a few experts and representatives from women's organisations and from the Association of Municipalities.

Important reference groups are NGOs, especially the associations of women's studies and men's studies. Another central reference group is the Monitoring Committee of the Equality Programme of the Finnish Government. The third significant partner is the reference group of the Nordic mainstreaming project.

Further information: Leila RÄSÄNEN
Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
PB 267, 00171 HELSINKI
Tel: (358) 9 160 3837; Fax: (358) 9 160 4582
E-mail: leila.rasanen@stm.vn.mailnet.fi

Norway's experience of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policy fields

The political initiative

The principle of mainstreaming is incorporated in the Norwegian Act on Gender Equality from 1978. The law was a useful tool for the later mainstreaming work in the ministry, and states that *public authorities shall promote gender equality in all sectors of society*. Early in the 1980s, the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs started its systematic and comprehensive work of mainstreaming a gender perspective into the ordinary work of all ministries. In a report to the Storting on gender equality policy in 1985, the principle of integrating a gender perspective into all levels of public administration was presented, and all political parties agreed on this goal. Two Equality Action Programmes were launched during the period 1986-94.

After the termination of the programmes in 1996, the government placed special responsibility for the political work of equality and gender mainstreaming with the State Secretary of each ministry. In 1997, a Committee of State Secretaries was set up to promote and monitor this work, headed by a new post at the Prime Minister's Office. The main responsibility within the Cabinet still lies with the Minister for Gender Equality.

The Gender Equality Section in the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs is responsible for equality policy in general and was the initiator responsible for the start of gender mainstreaming in all ministries and policy fields. The unit designed plans for the programmes (1986-94) and promoted a strategy on how the other ministries should become aware of the gender perspective in their work and develop their own plans for gender mainstreaming. The unit was responsible for initiating the work, developing strategies, training, disseminating information, monitoring and the final report.

The aim of the programmes

During the first period of the gender mainstreaming programme, emphasis was on concrete work, including commitments and proposals. The aim was to make the ministries aware of the fact that a gender perspective is relevant in most policy fields. Each ministry became responsible for gender mainstreaming within its field. It was emphasised that a gender perspective should be incorporated in the objectives and tasks of the ordinary planning process in the ministries. The integration of a gender perspective should be an autonomous process by being an integral part of the everyday planning and budgetary work, of commissions and of Bills to Parliament.

The policy area

All policy areas were subject to gender mainstreaming and all ministries had to consider gender simultaneously. Some areas were recognised as being more important than others, but all areas had to be looked into in search of gender relevance. Suitability or areas placed high on the political agenda were not sufficient criteria. The eye-opening effect in "new" areas was equally important. The aim was that gender mainstreaming should be taken into consideration in all fields and at all stages of the policy-making process and areas.

Techniques and tools

Awareness-raising and training courses were important tools, as well as involvement at the political level. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs held seminars twice a year for officials from all ministries, and consultative meetings with each ministry were arranged regularly. Learning how to take equality between women and men into account in all administrative proceedings and all policy-shaping work was the most important measure. This also covers the definition of mainstreaming used in the programme. All ministries were asked to report on how they planned and organised the work. At the end of the first period, a comprehensive report including a description of the gender perspective in each ministry and 500 concrete proposals was presented.

To prevent this work from becoming a project about personnel policy only, all proposals regarding personnel policy were excluded. This decision was controversial, since the majority had the opinion that equality policy is identical to personnel policy activities aiming at increasing the number of women as managers and promoting equal pay.

It was emphasised that it is the respective ministries themselves which can implement gender mainstreaming and shape equality policies in their own policy fields. The ministries were responsible for analysing their policy area in a gender perspective and proposing measures.

The minister responsible for equality has recently prepared a list selected from the Bills and White Papers put forward to be read in the Storting. In a letter to all the members of the Government, she pointed to the gender perspective in these documents and asked that this also be taken into consideration.

The actors involved

As part of the programmes, a network was established in the governmental administration identifying two officials responsible in each ministry, and the decision-making process was decentralised. Each department in the governmental bodies had to consider the gender perspective and took an active part in decision-making. The financial and human resources were also found at this level. Since 1996, this network has been strengthened by the involvement of the State Secretaries.

Monitoring

Monitoring has been an important part of the programmes. The ministries were required to plan the organisation of the work and define who was responsible for its implementation. They had to identify their tools and resources and report regularly.

Status and experience

Political will is crucial. In 1997, the Ministry of Children and Family presented a declaration to the Storting on gender policy: *The gender perspective in Norwegian policy*. This declaration will be repeated every four years. This document is a statement of the Government's will to adopt the gender perspective in most policies and illustrates the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policy fields. It gives an overview of the achievements so far, the current status of equality between women and men in different areas of society and the policy of the

Government. This declaration is an important element in the process of gender mainstreaming and involves all the ministries in the preparation of the paper by reporting on the status of equality in their policy areas. The aim of the report is not to describe the working methods, but what is really achieved in a wide spectrum of areas. The declaration was discussed in Parliament and made the political will to adopt the principle of gender mainstreaming visible.

The experience and results of the programmes are under evaluation. Preliminary reports indicate considerable variations between the ministries on how they have implemented the action programme and gender mainstreaming. The methods the ministries have chosen for mainstreaming and the way they have organised their work varies. Some ministries still find it difficult to see the relevance of incorporating a gender perspective in their ordinary work, and a lack of knowledge of gender issues is still a problem. Other ministries have made great progress. Acceptance by the highest management as well as by the lower levels is a key factor for achieving a good result. Monitoring and the involvement by one driving force have also been crucial.

The programmes were organised as a project and were expected to continue as a sustainable process, which they only partly did. Maintenance of the network in ministries and continuous training and seminars on gender issues are important. The programmes did not develop systematic and analytical tools to assess gender relevance in policy fields. A governmental committee now exists to develop good practice and methods for assessing gender relevance in policy proposals. The intention is to use this tool in the preparatory proceedings of all decisions made by the Cabinet.

This example shows how gender mainstreaming was organised when the aim was to cover all policy areas. The programmes developed organisational structures, procedures for monitoring, decision-making and stages in the process. The aim was not to develop analytical tools, but to raise awareness about gender relevance in all policy-making.

Further information: Jorun HJERTØ
Ministry of Children and Family Affairs
P.O. Box 8036 Dep., N - 0030 OSLO

High level political initiative: a first step to mainstreaming in Portugal

The Global Plan for Equal Opportunities in Portugal was launched in 1997 by the Prime Minister. It is the result of the participation of all ministries, invited by the Head of the Government, in reviewing their policies from the point of view of gender equality. The competence to encourage the execution of the Plan and to evaluate its results was attributed to a High Commissioner for Matters relating to the Promotion of Equality and the Family, who is politically dependent on the Prime Minister. The respective ministries will remain responsible for the execution of the different measures. Key elements of the Plan are the mainstreaming of education (inclusion of matters related to gender equality in school curricula as well as in professional training and job creation programmes; the training in gender equality of civil servants, education professionals in schools and training systems integrated in the labour market), and the mainstreaming of statistics (revising statistical information in order to ensure the inclusion of sex variables). Also, gender questions will be integrated in the impact studies of the different measures and programmes of the departments, at national, regional and local level, in order to evaluate their incidence on the living conditions of women and men. The Plan also consists of specific measures of a sectorial character.

The Commission for Equality and Women's Rights, besides its traditional role, shares responsibility for some of the objectives of the Plan, namely those concerned with information and training in general, and of civil servants in particular.

Further information: Commission for Equality and Women's Rights
Av. da República, 32-1°, P-1093 LISBONNE Codex
Tel: (351) 1-79 760 81; Fax: (351) 1 79 37 691

ii. Good practices of particular mainstreaming instruments and initiatives

An analytical tool: Gender Impact Assessment, The Netherlands 70

An analytical tool to assess gender relevance: SMART 71

An analytical tool: Gender Impact Assessment, Flanders (Belgium) 72

An educational tool: Involving flying experts, Sweden 73

Evaluation of legislative proposals in a gender perspective, Denmark 75

A strategic mix of tools: The 3R method at the local level, Sweden 77

A strategic mix of tools: The SIDA guidelines/tables 80

A strategic mix of tools: The Danish Development Co-operation 81

An analytical tool: Guidelines for gender analysis, New Zealand 82

An analytical tool: Gender Impact Assessment, The Netherlands

The Dutch Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was commissioned by the Dutch Equality Division and constructed by academic researchers in 1994. The aim of the project was to construct an instrument that could assess the impact on gender relations of any policy proposal at the national level. The GIA is an ex-ante evaluation, which means that the impact on gender relations are assessed before the final decision on a given policy proposal is taken. The results of the GIA can then be used in the process of political decision-making. If necessary, policies can be changed.

The GIA is designed to fit all policy areas. A basic but solid gender expertise is needed to use it. So far, the instrument has been used in the Ministries of Education, Justice, Agriculture, Nature and Fishery and Domestic Affairs. Projects in other ministries are in progress. GIA has also been used at the regional level. In some cases, the policy proposals have been changed to counter potential negative impacts on gender relations. The coordinating Minister of Emancipation has stated that the instrument has proven to be useful.

Most of the GIAs have been carried out by academic researchers, sometimes in a joint venture with civil servants.

The conceptual framework of the GIA identifies two basic structures that are central to gender inequality: the division of labour, and the organisation of intimacy. It further identifies two basic processes that constitute gender relations: the distribution of and access to resources, and the existence and application of gender rules. The GIA sets two criteria to decide whether impacts will be positive or negative: equality in the sense of equal rights and (un)equal treatment of (un)equal cases, and autonomy, in the sense of the possibility for women to decide about their own lives.

A GIA starts with assessing the gender relevance of a policy proposal (see the description of SMART on page 66) and continues with describing the current and future situation in a given policy field in terms of the conceptual framework, reaching a conclusion as to which structures and processes are at stake, and to what degree the criteria are met. It then analyses the policy proposal in these terms, and shows where it will affect the basic structures and processes. The two criteria are used to decide if the policy proposal will have a positive or negative impact on gender relations.

Following the GIA, a few similar instruments have been developed and used. Among those, the Gender Impact Test, which is more simple, and developed and used at the local and regional level. In 1998, the Dutch Association of Local Authorities also designed a GIA for the local level.

In the years ahead, more adaptations are to be expected. The Equality Division is co-ordinating further development, by organising seminars and expert meetings and by commissioning evaluation research.

Further information: Bakka des Bouvrie, Directie Coordinatie Emancipatie
Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, The Hague

An analytical tool to assess gender relevance: SMART

At the request of staff members in the European Commission, the first step of the Dutch GIA has been isolated as a separate instrument. SMART is a Simple Method to Assess the Relevance of policies To gender. It is a very simple instrument that can be used without expertise on gender issues, but not without data on women and men.

It consists of two questions:

* Is the policy proposal directed at one or more target groups?
* Are there differences between women and men in the field of the policy proposal (with regard to rights, resources, positions, representation, values and norms)?

When a policy proposal is directed at target groups, it will always imply the (re)distribution of resources and/or the application of rules or regulations. As resources are known to be unequally distributed between women and men, and as rules are often connected to rules about gender, all policies directed at target groups are relevant to gender.

Differences between women and men in a policy field are almost always connected to differences in resources or differences in values attached to masculinity or femininity. Therefore, sex differences in a policy field are a good indicator for gender relevance.

The SMART instrument does not explain what to do once a proposal is found to be gender relevant; it only asks to present figures showing whether or not there are differences between women and men in the field, and to design a plan on how to deal with the gender relevance of the proposal.

SMART has been adopted in the mainstreaming plan of the European Commission. Training in gender analysis of relevant staff has already been accomplished in DG IB and DG VIII, the field of development co-operation policies.

Further information: Mieke Verloo
Ass. Prof. Women's Studies, Faculty of Policy Sciences
University of Nijmegen, P.O. Box 9108
NL - 6500 HK NIJMEGEN
Tel. (31) 243 615 634; Fax (31) 243 612 379
E-mail: m.verloo@mailbox.kun.nl / m.verloo@bw.kun.nl

An analytical tool: Gender Impact Assessment, Flanders (Belgium)

The Flemish Gender Impact Assessment has been developed in the wake of its Dutch predecessor. It was developed by academic researchers in 1997, at the request of the Flemish authorities. It is a small instrument, which helps to assess policy proposals on their eventual differential impact on women and men in order to adapt these proposals, to make sure that discriminatory effects are neutralised and that gender equality is promoted in all policy areas.

The Flemish Gender Impact Assessment consists of three steps, i.e. to trace the gender dimension of a policy proposal, to estimate its size and to formulate alternatives where necessary. In summary, the instrument helps to recognise a problem, to assess its dimension and to find a solution for it. The first step reveals inconsistencies between the aims and contents of the policy proposal and its real context. It checks how far the situation of women and men is mentioned in the policy proposal and compares the way it is described with the current situation of both sexes. The second step estimates the effects of the policy proposal on the situation of women and men. Two levels are considered: the perception of women and men and the actual consequences for daily life. The instrument helps to assess whether or not the policy proposal reproduces and maintains a discriminating perception of women versus men and whether or not it has discriminatory results for their daily life. The final step of the instrument is intended to intercept the negative effects of the policy proposal and to make it promote equal opportunities. It gives a number of starting points to formulate alternatives. In this last step the instrument is actively directed at gender mainstreaming.

The instrument is a typical example of a tool aimed at mainstreaming a gender equality perspective into general policies. Its advantage consists in the fact that it requires the revision of policy proposals in terms of gender equality. Besides, it has been conceived for internal use in the administration, thereby involving all those responsible for the development and making of policies. However, the instrument requires some knowledge of gender issues and its correct implementation and therefore depends on the administration's capacity to develop such knowledge. Nonetheless, the first step of the instrument can be applied without being a gender expert. So, even if the user has difficulties applying the second and the third steps, s/he is able to detect eventual gender blindness and false assumptions in the first step. In this perspective, the instrument itself can stimulate awareness-raising among policy makers: being confronted with an instrument making you look at your own policy proposal from a different angle helps to develop new perspectives. The instrument is accompanied by a handbook, explaining the aims and concerns behind such a tool, as well as its way of working.

The Flemish Gender Impact Assessment might be an interesting example for countries with little or no tradition of gender equality studies. However, given the recent character of this tool, it has not yet been applied on a large scale. Therefore, it is not known how this instrument will work in the daily policy process.

Further information: Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap
Departement Coördinatie, attn. Martha Franken
Boudewijnlaan 30, B-1210 Brussels, Belgium

An educational tool: Involving flying experts, Sweden

The temporary secondment of a specialist from the unit of equality policies to other ministries, might be a good example of the role traditional gender equality units can play.

The Government has engaged a gender expert who has joined some of the ministries in order to help develop methods and routines which ensure a gender perspective in policy processes.

In 1995, the "flying gender expert" joined the division for youth policy at the Ministry of the Interior. Later the same year, she turned to the Ministry of Labour and later on, in 1996, she worked as an expert at the Ministry of Justice. When the "flying gender expert" started her work in a ministry she made agreements with the heads of a few divisions to attend meetings and to help officials integrate a gender perspective in their normal work. That meant in practice that she listened to an official when he/she described his/her work and explained where and how a gender perspective would be relevant. The experience is that most of the officials had a lot of knowledge of gender issues and also ideas of what areas were the most important ones (according to gender) and what routines they had to change in their normal work in order to integrate a gender perspective. With little help from the gender expert it was possible for many of the officials to see what kind of information they needed in order to be able to take the gender perspective into account. Another experience is that the most important help is to make the officials reflect on what a gender perspective is and when it is relevant. It is also important to legitimise the mainstreaming work and to show that a gender perspective adds knowledge to all kinds of work.

Since 1997, the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs has employed a "flying expert" half time for a two-year period, as a start to training and guiding the staff in mainstreaming a gender perspective in their normal work, such as the preparation of bills for Parliament and the budget dialogue with public authorities. After that period they will decide how the work will proceed.

The gender expert in the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs has collaborated with the State Secretary of the ministry and a working group and developed a Gender Programme for Social Welfare. The first phase of the programme will be finished on 30 June 1999. The target is that all divisions in the ministry and all public authorities, connected to the ministry, will have developed action plans for mainstreaming and started a developing process at that time.

The gender expert has presented an action programme for 1998 in order to support the development of the mainstreaming work in the ministry and the authorities.
It contains the following:

1. *Training*

   a. Introductory training of leaders, officials, committees of inquiry
   b. Further training of the officials
   c. Seminars on different subjects
   d. Identification of the need for training in a long-term perspective

2. *Information*

   a. Newsletter
   b. Seminars in order to exchange experience
   c. Networks

3. *The development of methods*

   a. Analytical tools
   b. Evaluation systems

4. *Follow-up*

5. *Support to public authorities and public companies*

Further information: Mona DANIELSON
Ministry of Labour, Equality Affairs Division,
S-103 33 STOCKHOLM
Tel: 46 8405 1299; Fax: 46 824 7152
E-mail: mona.danielson@labour.ministry.se

Evaluation of legislative proposals in a gender perspective, Denmark

Objectives of the evaluation (Brief description of the content)

The objective of evaluating legislative proposals in a gender perspective is to analyse which consequences such a legislative proposal will have on equality between women and men. The result of the evaluation should be included in comments on the proposal.

The authors of such a proposal should therefore have a clear idea of how equality between women and men can be defined regarding the area in question and how equality can be promoted.

The significance of the evaluation becomes clear when an evaluation of the "equality consequences" is included in the comments on a legislative proposal in the same way as evaluations of the "economic and administrative consequences".

Background (Starting date)

As a result of an inquiry made by the Equality Committee of the Social Democratic Party, in Spring 1995 the Prime Minister asked the Minister for Labour to include, on an experimental basis, evaluation in a gender perspective in the comments on equality-relevant labour legislation, within the area of active labour market policy and the regulation of leave schemes.

Aim of the project

The government intends to evaluate in a gender perspective all legislative initiatives in the future as soon as the necessary experience is available.

Policy area

The Minister for Labour informed the Prime Minister that, as from the Parliamentary year 1995/96, arrangements would be made in order to include evaluation of the equality consequences in comments on legislative proposals within the field of Leave Schemes, Labour Law, Active Labour Policy and part of the Working Environment Regulation.

Policy level

It is the minister's responsibility that legislative proposals meet the standards of Parliament; consequently, the level is the ministerial level.

Techniques and tools used

The evaluation of the consequences on equality of a given legislative proposal may be divided into the following main points:

1) Does the proposal promote equality between women and men?
2) Does the proposal have any consequences for the balance between women and men, or does it maintain status quo?

Item 1:
This implies that a position is taken on whether a given proposal will in reality have a positive effect on equality between women and men, whereby equality becomes an independent goal for the legislation within the field of competence of the Ministry of Labour.

Item 2:
This implies that it is evaluated whether or not the proposal will change the balance between women and men, based on the aim that equality must at least not suffer as a result of the proposal.

Additionally, it is to be noted that the equality evaluation should also be taken into consideration when realising different initiatives, as a follow-up to the adoption of a legislative proposal. In this context, it may prove useful that the comments on the legislative proposal take into consideration how the equality aspect can be included in the application of the law.

Procedure

When a legislative proposal is being drafted within the area of the Ministry of Labour it will normally be the result of many previous reflections, e.g. in a working group or in the negotiations connected with a political compromise.

For the equality evaluation to have real substance, it is important that the division in question should be aware, from the very beginning, of the fact that an equality evaluation of a legislative proposal has to take place in order to become a part of the reflections. Therefore, the equality aspect should be considered from the very first draft comments, as far as possible.

The responsibility of the evaluation falls within the purview of every division involved. This means that the actors involved are the persons who usually write the legislative proposals.

Within the Ministry of Labour, a standing working group (task force) has been established to assist the individual divisions.

External partners are consulted on the ideas behind the suggested legislation in order to ensure a cross-disciplinary input. It is well known that a doctor sees another aspect of a gender perspective than a lawyer but all relevant angles have to be taken into consideration.

Further information: Ms Agnete ANDERSEN
Special Adviser, Ministry of Labour
Holmens Kanal 20, DK-1060 COPENHAGEN K
Tel: (45) 33 92 99 63; Fax: (45) 33 12 13 78

A strategic mix of tools: The 3R method at the local level, Sweden

The JAMKOM project has, within the framework of the Programme Group of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities (SALA), developed and tested a method, the R Method, for incorporating gender equality considerations into the work of local authorities.

During the spring of 1996, an invitation went out to all the local government committees and boards in Sweden to take part in testing the method. In early autumn of the same year a selection of the committees and boards was made on the basis of certain criteria: geographical distribution, variation in size of the municipal councils, committees and boards from different fields, previous experience of working with change and development within their field of operations and, ideally, previous experience of work with gender equality. Finally, six municipalities and committees/boards were selected.

In September and October 1996, the ideas behind the project were presented at an introductory meeting with the relevant senior officials from the local authorities: that is, the municipal commissioners, the chairpersons of the committees and boards, and administrative heads. The conditions for participating in the project were set out in a contract detailing reciprocal commitments, such as the requirement that the committees/boards apply JAMKOM methods at a minimum of five meetings during the project period, and that they would receive SEK 40,000 to cover the extra costs incurred. A timetable was presented. It was made clear that the tests should be conducted using the normal staff, and that the committees/boards were at liberty to limit the JAMKOM work to certain areas of their activities.

At the first JAMKOM meetings a talk was given on Sweden's gender equality policy and gender theory. All members of the committees/boards and the officials involved were given two JAMKOM compendia. The first compendium contained factual and background information, whereas the second was a work-file in which the different phases of the project were set out, from an inventory, through the statement of objectives, to a final assessment of the project. Each committee/board appointed a local project leader who drew up a local project plan and tested the R method in their respective towns together with other colleagues and politicians, and in close collaboration with project officials at SALA. The result of the R tests have always been discussed at a meeting of the committee/board. The local authorities' project ended in midsummer 1997, and the various committees/boards presented reports on their work in autumn 1997. Two conferences aimed primarily at local authorities were held (in Växjö and Stockholm) to present the work of the Programme Group and the project. A number of reports are still under preparation and are expected to be presented in January 1998.

R method

The R method is based on a systematisation of Swedish experience of work on gender equality, and has also been inspired by other methods used in gender and action research. R stands for Representation, Resources and Realia (see page 73). Representation and Resources are quantitative variables, whereas Realia is qualitative. The idea behind the method is that a systematic review of men's and women's representation in different places and positions within the committee's/board's field of operations, and of the distribution and utilisation of resources, would trigger discussions about why the products the municipality produces - goods, services and

situations - are as they are, who gets what, and under what conditions. How do the activities of the local authorities work for the people who live there?

The tests that have been carried out by the councils/boards have shown that the method really does work in that way. The surveys and analyses that have been carried out have led to the rethinking of gender equality in the committees'/boards' spheres of operation, including the writing of specific gender equality objectives into their normal guidelines. Some have also decided to include gender equality in their budgets, to collect new and continuous information in the form of statistics and different types of customer surveys, and to actively monitor the impact of the different measures. The R method has been adopted, and some municipalities have decided to spread the method to other committees and administrative authorities.

Representation

The first part of the methodology deals with looking at how women and men are represented in the committee's/board's field of operations, beginning with the composition of the committee/board itself and the administration. From this initial plan, the study of representation can move on to other committees, working groups, permanent reference groups, ad hoc reference groups, the committees of associations and organisations within the field of operations and which the board/committee and administration have dealings with.

To assess how women and men are represented among those who contact a committee/board to raise an issue, "contact lists" have been made, desegregated according to the sex of the persons concerned. This was done in order to raise awareness of the distribution of representation among those who the politicians and officials come into contact with and receive information from. The contact lists led to lively discussions.

Resources

The resources analysed by the R test are money, time and space. The main idea was that the results obtained under the Representation section could be supplemented by statistics concerning the distribution of resources. One example of this is that certain committees/boards have constructed "salary trees" showing the total number of women and men and their position on the salary scale. One committee studied the gender distribution among artists exhibiting at the local art gallery, and the information was completed under the resources section of the test by recording how much money was paid to the female and male artists respectively. The amount of funding distributed to different cases, subject areas, and organisations has also been studied.

All the committees/boards have timed some of their meetings. Besides recording how much women and men talked at the meetings, more detailed analyses of the measurements were carried out.

Realia

Realia is qualitative, and is about the norms and values expressed in the structure that produces the local authority activity, i.e. committees and boards, administrative authorities, work-places - and the products that are produced - goods, services and situations. Who recognises themselves in it? Whose needs are served?

Some committees/boards have looked at the Realia by studying, together with the staff, such things as morning assembly at day-nurseries, and classroom situations. Others have visited different establishments for which they are responsible. The politicians have formed multi-party groups and gone to places like sports centres and made note of such things as lighting, hair-dryers and sauna space. They have also interviewed employees about the amount of attention they give to girls and boys, women and men. One committee working with meetings between the administration, politicians and employees has decided that gender equality is to be a regular annual theme for a meeting when the results of the previous year's decisions and measures are to be followed up. The politicians who have been involved in different studies have expressed their satisfaction. Some have said that they have received greater insight into their field of operations and that they understand better what gender equality really means and how they can specifically work for it.

The town planning committee that took part in JAMKOM has used "mental maps" to help build up an understanding of how different categories of citizens feel about a particular urban renewal area. This involved groups not to be found among the normal reference groups in the committee's field of operations.

Further information: Helen LUNDKVIST
The Swedish Association of Local Authorities (SALA)
S-11882 STOCKHOLM,
Tel: 46 8 772 41 00; Fax: 46) 8 772 47 88
Email: helen.lundkvist@svekom.se.

A strategic mix of tools: The SIDA guidelines/tables

Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, has worked with mainstreaming a gender perspective into Swedish bilateral development cooperation since the mid 1980s. In Sida's new Action Programme for Promoting Equality between Women and Men in Partner Countries (April 1997), mainstreaming is clearly established as the main strategy and the division of roles and responsibilities for achieving mainstreaming is clearly defined.

A variety of methods and tools have been developed over the years, including since 1988 an extensive gender training programme. More recently in the 1990s handbooks on gender mainstreaming in different sector areas have been developed by a number of departments and divisions within Sida. To date, handbooks are available on health, education, agriculture, transport, water resource management and conflicts. Other handbooks are currently under development, for example on energy, trade and technical cooperation.

The handbooks consist of three parts: firstly, discussion is provided on the linkages between gender equality and the sector in question, i.e. why gender equality is important for health, education, agriculture, etc; secondly, some brief guidance for policy dialogue is provided, including some key quotations from major international agreements on gender equality, and finally key questions are provided for the major entry-points for working with gender equality in Sida's programme cycle - sector analysis, project formulation/appraisal, monitoring and evaluation.

The handbooks were developed specifically for Sida personnel but may also be useful for other actors in development cooperation, such as government partners, NGOs and consultants. The first and second parts of the handbooks may also be useful in other contexts than that of development cooperation.

Further information: Carolyn Hannan ANDERSSON
SIDA, S-105 25 STOCKHOLM
Tel: 46 8 698 51 65; Fax: 46 8 15 30 54
Email: carolyn.hannan-andersson@sida.se.

A strategic mix of tools: the Danish Development Co-operation

The Danish Development Co-operation operates in a similar way, with a strategic mix of tools. Its overall objective is to reduce poverty in a gender-specific way, taking into account women's and men's different roles and needs.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a specific policy in 1987, entitled "Danida's WID Policy Towards the Year 2000" (WID=Women in Development). The elements of the policy are in line with the recommendations of the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995), i.e. that the gender perspective is to be mainstreamed into all policy and planning.

This programme is carried out as a part of everyday projects by the actors usually involved. For that purpose, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has launched an extensive training programme in order to strengthen the number of people concerned, both in the Ministry as well as in Embassies and Consulates.

Another tool to ensure the incorporation of the gender perspective in the development co-operation is to set up task forces with experts who are able to deal with both the specific content of the project and the gender aspects. These task forces have created a forum where they can work on the gender aspect in a systematic and inter-disciplinary manner.

Further information: Susanne WENDT
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
COPENHAGEN

An analytical tool: Guidelines for gender analysis, New Zealand

In 1995, the Ministry of Women's Affairs published guidelines for a gender analysis of policies. These guidelines provide a framework for carrying out a gender analysis. The aim of these guidelines is to help policy-makers to achieve the government's policy goals in terms of gender equality and to integrate a gender perspective into all policy-making. In addition to the public sector, these guidelines also focus on private companies and organisations, and they are meant to help improve management practices and targeting of products and services. In the guidelines the policy process is divided into six stages: defining desired outcomes, identifying problems and issues, developing options, analysing options and making recommendations, implementing decisions, monitoring and evaluating policies. For each of these stages, the guidelines provide issues to consider a given policy from a gender perspective.

These guidelines are a good example of a manual meant to help individual policy-makers to integrate a gender perspective in their daily work. It is difficult to control the effective implementation of such guidelines, but they are a very useful tool for awareness-raising. Another strong point of these guidelines is that they cover the complete policy process.

Unfortunately, the guidelines for gender analysis have not been implemented yet, due to lack of political and bureaucratic support. In the near future however, the Minister of Women's Affairs intends to work with the New Zealand State Services Commission and the Audit Department to develop ways of integrating the expectation of gender analysis into formal accountability documents such as chief executives' performance agreements, and departmental purchase agreements (a formal structure by which Ministers "purchase" certain outputs such as policy advice, from their departments).

The Minister of Women's Affairs (who has also become the Prime Minister) is about to develop a new strategy to make more progress on the issue of gender analysis mainstreaming.

Further information: Susan EASTING
Ministry of Women's Affairs
PO Box 10 049, Wellington, New Zealand
Fax: 0-4-472 0961
E-mail: mwa @mwa.govt.nz

APPENDIX A

Members of the Group of Specialists

The Group of Specialists was composed as follows:

Representatives of the CDEG

Ms Agnete ANDERSEN
Special Adviser, Ministry of Labour, Holmens Kanal 20, DK - 1060 COPENHAGEN K, Denmark
Ms Julia TERCERO VALENTIN
Head of Department, European Relations, Women's Institute, Ministry of Social Affairs, C/Condesa de Venadito 34, MADRID, Spain

Specialists in the field of equality

Ms Catherine DEGAUQUIER,
1996-97: Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Mons-Hainaut
Since 1998: FOREM, Centre for In-Service Training, Rue des Verts Pâturages 10, B - 7000 MONS, Belgium
Ms Mieke VERLOO (Chair of the Group of Specialists)
Ass. Prof. Women's Studies, Faculty of Policy Sciences, University of Nijmegen, P.O. Box 9108, NL -6500 HK NIJMEGEN, The Netherlands
Ms Malgorzata FUSZARA
Institute of Applied Social Sciences, University of Warsaw, Zurawia Str. 4, PL - 00 503 WARSAW, Poland
Ms Maria Manuela DA SILVA
Economist, Ex-Professor at the High Institute of Economics and Management, Casa de Mambre, Junqueiro/Azoia, P - 2710 COLARES, Portugal
Ms Milica ANTIC GABER
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Philosophy, Sociology Department, Aškerceva 2, SLO - 6100 LJUBLJANA, Slovenia
Ms Birgitta ÅSESKOG
Principal Administrative Officer, Ministry of Labour, Equality Affairs Division, Drottninggatan 21, S - 103 33 STOCKHOLM, Sweden

Representative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe

Ms Ulla ARNHOLM
Councillor, Fenland District Council, Nämndhuset, Västra Tullen, S - 44232 KUNGÄLV (private address: Bäckgatan 32, 44230 Kungälv), Sweden

Consultant expert

Ms Petra MEIER
Research Officer, Free University of Brussels, Belgium

APPENDIX B

Terms of reference

1. **Name of the Committee:** Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming (EG-S-MS)

2. **Type of Committee:** Select Committee of Experts

3. **Source of terms of reference:** Steering Committee for Equality between women and men (CDEG)

4. **Terms of reference:**

   i. carry out a survey of measures taken and implemented for the mainstreaming of the gender perspective into general policies, programme planning, as well as into sectoral policies and activities at all levels of society, both in the member States of the Council of Europe and in regional/international organisations;

   ii. on the basis of this survey, prepare methodologies for mainstreaming equality and identify tools, strategies and actors for integrating the gender dimension in an effective and visible way, as well as for its evaluation and follow-up, with a view to transmitting recommendations to member States and to the different bodies of the Council of Europe.

5. **Composition:**

   The Group shall be composed of 8 experts, 2 members of the CDEG (Denmark and Spain) and 6 specialists in the field of equality between women and men (researchers, members of national administrations, etc.). Their expenses shall be borne by the Council of Europe. These specialists shall be appointed by the Secretariat, following suggestions from CDEG members.

   The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe shall be invited to be represented on the EG-S-MS without the right to vote.

6. **Working methods:**

   In the framework of its terms of reference, the EG-S-MS may have contacts or consultations with persons and/or organisations possessing specialist knowledge of the subject under consideration. It can also call upon external consultants.

7. **Duration of the terms of reference:**

   These terms of reference expire on 31 December 1997[1].

---

1 The terms of reference were extended until the end of February 1998.

APPENDIX C

Gender mainstreaming at the level of the Council of Europe

1. Current conditions for gender mainstreaming in the Council of Europe

The Group of Specialists has noted from the Secretary General's annual reports on equality between women and men that gender mainstreaming is still almost non-existent or in its very early stages in the Council of Europe. There seems, however, to be a certain willingness to promote equality between women and men in the Organisation. Two high-level bodies to deal with this question have recently been set up:

- the Rapporteur Group of the Committee of Ministers on Equality between Women and Men (1996);

- the Committee on Equal Opportunities of the Parliamentary Assembly (January 1998).

These bodies are specific gender equality "machineries", in that their main function is to redress gender imbalances. Their work can nevertheless be fundamental in forming the necessary medium for mainstreaming. They could encourage the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly to issue a strong formal political commitment to gender mainstreaming and have an important influence on other bodies working under the authority of the Committee of Ministers. As the examples of the Swedish Government and the European Commission have shown, such a strong political commitment is the main prerequisite for introducing and implementing gender mainstreaming. Many other facilitating conditions are of course needed, such as transfer of knowledge of gender relations (awareness raising/education) from bodies dealing with equality issues to other bodies, and a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making posts within the Organisation.

The Group wants to point out that the methodologies and the recommendations contained in its Final Report of Activities can be used to reorganise the work of the various bodies of the Council of Europe and its staff policy. It does therefore not want to address any specific recommendations to the Council of Europe other than those which are contained in the report, which it hopes will serve as a useful tool for mainstreaming within the Organisation. However, it thought that some concrete, practical guidelines as to how to begin mainstreaming might be useful. The Group therefore looked into the field of intergovernmental co-operation, at some examples described in the Secretary General's annual reports in order to determine whether and to what extent they could be described as attempts at or examples of gender mainstreaming. Most of these examples involve the Steering Committee for equality between women and men, one of the tasks of which is to co-operate with other committees.

2. The co-operation work of the Steering Committee for equality between women and men

The Steering Committee for equality between women and men (CDEG) is the intergovernmental body within the Council of Europe which is responsible, under the authority of the Council of Europe's decision-making body, the Committee of Ministers, for defining, stimulating and conducting

the Organisation's action to promote equality between women and men. In this capacity, it prepares and implements projects aimed at promoting equality between women and men in the framework of the Intergovernmental Programme of Activities of the Council of Europe. Most of the projects carried out by the CDEG aim at redressing gender imbalances, and address areas which are not dealt with by other committees of the Council of Europe, for example combating violence against women, or promoting women's participation in political and public life. However, the CDEG has always been very concerned about how to bring out the gender equality dimension in all sectors of the organisation, given the multidisciplinary nature of the question of equality between women and men.

The terms of reference of the CDEG state that one of the tasks of the Committee is "to co-operate with other steering and ad hoc committees in the implementation of various projects with a view, in particular, to improving and developing their activities so as to contribute to the implementation of the objectives coming under ii. above, for which the CDEG has principal responsibility."[1]

This paragraph gives the CDEG a clear mandate to co-operate with other Committees in order to ensure that they take the gender dimension into account in their activities. During recent years, the CDEG has intensified this co-operation, through the setting up of joint groups of specialists or multisectoral groups, through organising joint seminars and through participating in multidisciplinary projects. The Group takes the view that this work can not be considered as an example of gender mainstreaming, but it constitutes, in some ways, a step towards mainstreaming in that it often reorganises the policy processes, involves the actors usually active in the field and makes gender equality visible in an area where it has not necessarily been taken into account before.

The Group looked into some examples of co-operation between the CDEG and other committees. It also examined other projects and programmes described in the Secretary General's report on equality between women and men in the Council of Europe. The main conclusion of the Group of Specialists is that mainstreaming is almost non-existent in the Council of Europe, and that a major effort in the field is needed. It would, however, underline the important work of the CDEG, which has, during recent years, made a considerable effort to spread knowledge about gender issues within the organisation, thus improving the conditions to begin gender mainstreaming.

3. Joint Groups of Specialists/Joint Seminars

a. Migration and gender mainstreaming

For a long period, immigration into Europe was overwhelmingly male, and immigration policies were therefore geared towards men. In recent years, however, immigration in Europe has become increasingly female, and in addition to the traditional migration flows from non-European countries to Europe, a new trend of migration from Central and Eastern Europe to Western Europe has appeared.

---

[1] Paragraph ii of the terms of reference states that the task of the CDEG is: "to promote European co-operation between member States with a view to achieving real equality between women and men as a sine qua non of genuine democracy and to stimulate actions at both national and Council of Europe level, having regard to activities undertaken within other international fora, in particular the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women."

These facts led the CDEG to propose to the European Committee on Migration (CDMG) the setting up of a Joint Specialist Group on migration, cultural diversity and equality between women and men. This Group worked during the years 1994 and 1995 and studied the situation and the status of immigrant women and the impact on equality between women and men of the cultural diversity in European society resulting from recent immigration. The Group found out, *inter alia*, that women in migration had been largely invisible in policy-making and research and that the barriers and obstacles immigrant women faced in the public sphere were often different from the obstacles immigrant men faced. In addition, many immigrant women faced special obstacles in the private and domestic sphere, where they were sometimes subject to patriarchal authority because of their dependence on their husband's or father's status. It also happened that they were denied fundamental rights and freedoms in the name of culture and religion, whereas men were not. The Group, in its Final Report of Activities, has put forward a number of suggestions on how both gender equality policy and integration policy might take these concerns into account.

The Group focused on the specific problems of women, and did not look into the specific problems of immigrant men. For this reason, the project may seem at first sight as having been an example of "traditional" equality policy, aiming at redressing the imbalances between women and men. However, if a closer look is taken, it is more than that. Firstly, this was an attempt at **reorganising** work on immigration policies, by setting up a **joint** group. The **actors** were experts both from the immigration sector and from the equality sector, who both brought in their specific knowledge and had to make their points of view meet. Thus, there was an **educational element** in the project, as experts in immigration policies had to take gender equality into account in their work, and gender became **visible** within the immigration sector. This project seems to have challenged the assumption that immigration and integration policies can be "neutral", revealing hidden beliefs regarding realities and values and therefore contributing to a better information about the issue, which, if used by governments and others involved, should lead to and **improvement** and **development** of the policy process.

b. Equality, racism and intolerance

Another Joint Group of Specialists, composed this time of members of the CDEG and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), was entrusted with identifying the specific forms of racial discrimination and intolerance which women face on basis of their sex, as well as with examining the issue of universality versus cultural relativism in regard to the fundamental right of women and men to equality. The Group worked during the years 1996-1997 and put forward a number of guidelines addressed to both Committees. Even if it had a mandate to focus its work on women (mainly women from immigrant communities and ethnic minorities), its reflection led the Group into another type of analysis, namely that women and men face specific types of discrimination on the basis of their sex, and that racism often expresses itself in different ways towards women and men and affects them differently. The Group therefore pointed out that for the ECRI, awareness of gender was absolutely necessary when examining these matters. It also emphasised that the CDEG should not only examine the problems facing women and girls of immigrant and ethnic minority communities, but also put a special emphasis on the group of immigrant males, men and boys. The example of this group is similar to the one on migration and contains all the elements which have already been pointed out above (reorganisation of work, the educational element, participation of the

actors usually involved, the visibility of gender) However, it goes further in that it clearly took into account the gender perspective, pointing out not only the problems of women, but also the specific problems men and boys may face when it comes to racism and intolerance. It seems therefore to have been a **new way of looking at racism**, which means that there was clearly a **development** and, possibly, and **improvement** of the policy process.

3. Multidisciplinary Groups of Specialists

The multidisciplinary Group of Specialists on action against trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation which has recently been set up under the auspices of the CDEG (the first meeting was held in December 1997) might also contain some elements of gender mainstreaming (eg the members are from different committees of the Council of Europe and not only equality experts), even if it seems rather to be "an extension" of equality policies. However, the Group certainly has the opportunity to integrate the gender perspective in its work, and will hopefully do so.

4. Activities/projects of other Council of Europe bodies which may be labelled as mainstreaming

Since 1990, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe has published an annual report on equality between women and men in the Council of Europe. These reports describe both the activities of the Organisation and the advancement of equality within the Secretariat. The only field where gender mainstreaming seems to have been applied, is the work carried out by the Pompidou Group[1]. In the early stages of the work of this Forum, it became clear that women are a minority among treated users of illicit drugs in major western European cities. The Group wanted to find out whether this reflected a genuinely lower prevalence of drug misuse among females, or a lack of equal opportunity and subtle discrimination by inadequate drug service provision. It therefore felt it was necessary to look specifically into the situation of women as users of illicit drugs.

Since 1984, the Pompidou Group has been active in the field of "women and drugs", looking at developments in female drug use and in service provision for women, pregnant drug misusers, drug misusers and their children. It has examined whether these reflect progress towards equality policies in the health sector or whether there are other motivations behind them. In 1995, national policies and programmes still showed limited prevention, treatment and rehabilitation efforts for women; treatment is in particular inadequate for pregnant women and for those with small children. The Pompidou Group took up these issues in its work programme 1994-97. The major event in this field in 1995 was the European Symposium of the Pompidou Group which examined differentiated approaches to drug prevention among girls and young women, reflecting discussions in member States about a gender-sensitive approach, which is considered a major task for policy development in the 1990s.

Even if it may perhaps be said that this work began as an effort to redress possible imbalances between women and men, it seems to have, during the years, evolved into becoming an issue where

[1] The Pompidou Group is a multidisciplinary forum for ministerial co-operation, to combat drug abuse and trafficking in drugs.

the equality perspective is totally incorporated into the work. It presents most of the characteristics included in the definition of gender mainstreaming: it is an attempt at reorganising, improving and developing the work on combating drug abuse and trafficking in drugs, carried out by those usually involved and not by equality experts, and it integrates the gender perspective.

* * *

Another project, **which cannot be labelled as an example of gender mainstreaming** but which is included here as an **example of a prerequisite for gender mainstreaming**, is the project "Access to Higher Education in Europe", carried out by the Higher Education and Research Committee (CC-HER). In the framework of this project, data has been collected on the participation of women in higher education and the subjects they follow, showing a strong correlation between the gender status of subjects and their potential for future economic reward. The Project has also identified examples of good practice in both Eastern and Western Europe, concerning for example welfare provision and the opportunity to follow further education, information campaigns in schools to encourage girls to take "masculine" subjects.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Åseskog, Birgitta (1997) *Mainstreaming of Gender Equality*. Presentation at the Seminar on "Mainstreaming of gender equality - indispensable condition of development and strengthening of democracy", Warsaw (Poland), 30.6.1997.

Berget, Grete (1996) *Opening address*. European Women's Conference "Strategies for Change", Oslo (Norway), 26.3.1996.

Braithwaite, Mary (1996?) *Summary of presentation for the workshop on local initiatives, partnership and equality*. Paper.

Breitenbach, Esther & Fiona Mackay (eds.) (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996) *Gender Audit. Putting Scottish Women in the Picture*. Edinburgh, Engender.

Council of Europe (1995) *Conference on "Equality and democracy: Utopia or challenge"*. Proceedings. Strasbourg (France), 9-11 February 1995.

Council of Europe (1996) *Final Report of the Group of Specialists on Equality and Democracy*.

Council of Europe (1997) *International Seminar "Promoting equality: a common issue for men and women"*. Proceedings. Strasbourg (France), 17-18 June 1997.

Council of Europe (1997) *4th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men*. Declaration and resolutions. Istanbul (Turkey), 13-14 November 1997.

Council of Europe (1997) *Information Forum on "Guaranteeing freedom of choice in matters of reproduction, sexuality and lifestyles in Europe: trends and developments"*. Proceedings. Tallinn (Estonia), 27-29 November 1997.

Council of Europe (1997) *Women in politics in the Council of Europe member States*. Information document (EG (97) 6 rev.)

DFFE (1995) *Guidance for Officials on Policy Appraisal for Equal Treatment*. London, Department for Education and Employment.

DFFE (1996) *One Year On: Implementing the Global Platform for Action from the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. Government Progress and Plans*. London, Department for Education and Employment.

European Commission (1996) *Incorporating Equal Opportunities for Women and Men into all Community Policies and Activities*. Communication from the Commission COM (96) 67 final.

IDS (1997) *Approaches to institutionalising gender*. BRIDGE Development and Gender in Brief Issue 5. http:\\www.ids.susx.ac.uk.

Leijenaar, Monique (1997) *Mainstreaming: The Next Step in Equal Opportunities Policy*. Discussion Paper for the European Meeting of Directors for Equal Opportunities Policy in Amsterdam (The Netherlands), 7.2.1997.

McCrudden, Christopher (1996) *Mainstreaming: The Way Forward?* Paper.

Ministry of Women's Affairs (1996) *The Full Picture: Guidelines for Gender Analysis*. Wellington (New Zealand), Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Ministry of Women's Equality (1997) *Gender Lens: A guide to gender-inclusive policy and program development*. British Columbia (Canada), Ministry of Women's Equality.

Nanette Funk & Magda Mueller (1993) *Gender Politics and Post Communism*. Routledge. London.

Nordic Council of Ministers (1995) *Programme for Nordic Co-operation on Gender Equality 1995-2000*. Copenhagen, Nordic Council of Ministers.

Razavi, Shahra & Carol Miller (1995) *Gender Mainstreaming. A Study of Efforts by the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO to Institutionalise Gender Issues*. New York, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

Rubery, Jill (1996) *Mainstreaming Gender into Employment Policies*. Paper.

Schalkwijk, Johanna, Helen Thomas & Beth Woroniuk (1996) *Mainstreaming: A Strategy for Achieving Equality between Women & Men. A Think Piece*. Stockholm, SIDA.

Status of Women Canada (1996) *Gender-Based Analysis. A Guide for Policy-Making*. Ottawa, Status of Women Canada.

United Nations (1979) *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. United Nations General Assembly.

UN Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) *Global Platform for Action*. New York, United Nations.

UNIFEM (1995) *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Guidelines for the Integration of Gender Perspectives into United Nations Human Rights Activities and Programmes*. New York, United Nations Development Fund for Women.

Van Haegendoren, Mieke, Else De Donder, Elke Valgaeren (1997) *Basisstatistieken nodig voor een Gelijke Kansenbeleid*. Diepenbeek, Limburgs Universitair Centrum.

Walby, Sylvia (1997) *Gender Transformations*. Routledge. London.

Woodward, Alison & Petra Meier (1997) *Emancipatie-EffectRapporage*. Onderzoek in opdracht van de Vlaamse Minister belast met het Gelijke Kansenbeleid en Brusselse Aangelegenheden. Brussel, Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.

Woodward, Alison & Petra Meier (1997) *Handboek bij de Emancipatie-EffectRapporage*. Onderzoek in opdracht van de Vlaamse Minister belast met het Gelijke Kansenbeleid en Brusselse Aangelegenheden. Brussel, Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.

Knezevic, Durda et al (1997) *Governments Without Women or the Long March*. Zagreb. Zenska Infoteka.